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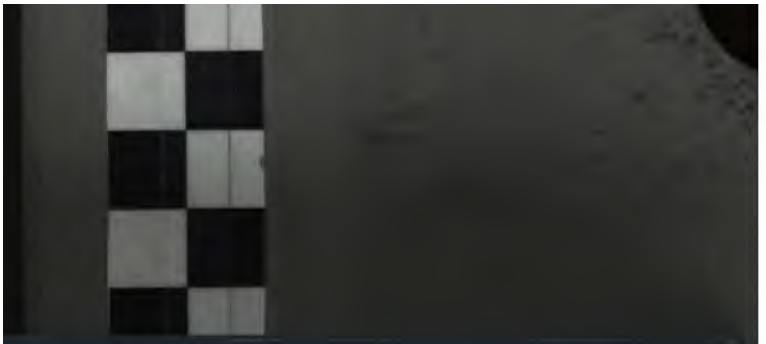

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THE

WORKS OF JOHN RUSKIN,

HONORARY STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD.

VOLUME VII.

ARIADNE FLORENTINA.

GEORGE ALLEN,
SUNNYSIDE, ORPINGTON, KENT.
1876.

ARIADNE FLORENTINA.

SIX LECTURES

ON

WOOD AND METAL ENGRAVING.

WITH APPENDIX.

GIVEN BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD,
IN MICHAELMAS TERM, 1872.

BY

JOHN RUSKIN, LL.D.,

HONORARY STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, AND SLADE PROFESSOR OF FINE ART.

GEORGE ALLEN,
SUNNYSIDE, ORPINGTON, KENT.
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ARIADNE FLORENTINA.

SIX LECTURES

ON

WOOD & METAL ENGRAVING.

LECTURE I.

DEFINITION OF THE ART OF ENGRAVING.

1. THE entrance on my duty for to-day begins the fourth year of my official work in Oxford; and I doubt not that some of my audience are asking themselves, very doubtfully—at all events, I ask myself, very anxiously—what has been done.

For practical result, I have not much to show. I announced, a fortnight since, that I would meet, the day before yesterday, any gentleman who wished to

attend this course for purposes of study. My class, so minded, numbers four, of whom three wish to be artists, and ought not therefore, by rights, to be at Oxford at all; and the fourth is the last remaining unit of the class I had last year.

2. Yet I neither in this reproach myself, nor, if I could, would I reproach the students who are not here. I do not reproach myself; for it was impossible for me to attend properly to the schools and to write the grammar for them at the same time; and I do not blame the absent students for not attending a school from which I have generally been absent myself. In all this, there is much to be mended, but, in true light, nothing to be regretted.

I say, I had to write my school grammar. These three volumes of lectures under my hand,* contain, carefully set down, the things I want you first to know. None of my writings are done fluently; the second volume of Modern Painters was all of it written twice—most of it, four times,—over; and these lectures have been written, I don't know how many times. You may think that this was done merely in an author's vanity, not in a tutor's care. To the vanity I plead guilty,—no man is more intensely vain than I am; but my vanity is set on having it *known* of me that I am a good master, not in having

* Inaugural series, Aratra Pentelici, and Eagle's Nest.

it *said* of me that I am a smooth author. My vanity is never more wounded than in being called a fine writer, meaning—that nobody need mind what I say.

3. Well, then, besides this vanity, I have some solicitude for your progress. You may give me credit for it or not, as you choose, but it is sincere. And that your advance may be safe, I have taken the best pains I could in laying down laws for it. In these three years I have got my grammar written, and, with the help of many friends, all working instruments in good order; and now we will try what we can do. Not that, even now, you are to depend on my presence with you in personal teaching. I shall henceforward think of the lectures less, of the schools more; but my best work for the schools will often be by drawing in Florence or in Lancashire—not here.

4. I have already told you several times that the course through which I mean every student in these schools should pass, is one which shall enable them to understand the elementary principles of the finest art. It will necessarily be severe, and seem to lead to no immediate result. Some of you will, on the contrary, wish to be taught what is immediately easy, and gives prospect of a manifest success.

But suppose they should come to the Professor of

Logic and Rhetoric, and tell him they wanted to be taught to preach like Mr. Spurgeon, or the Bishop of ——.

He would say to them,—I cannot, and if I could I would not, tell you how to preach like Mr. Spurgeon, or the Bishop of ——. Your own character will form your style; your own zeal will direct it; your own obstinacy or ignorance may limit or exaggerate it; but my business is to prevent, as far as I can, your having *any* particular style; and to teach you the laws of all language, and the essential power of your own.

In like manner, this course, which I propose to you in art, will be calculated only to give you judgment and method in future study, to establish to your conviction the laws of general art, and to enable you to draw, if not with genius, at least with sense and propriety.

The course, so far as it consists in practice, will be defined in my Instructions for the schools. And the theory connected with that practice is set down in the three lectures at the end of the first course I delivered—those on Line, Light, and Colour.

You will have, therefore, to get this book,* and it is the only one which you will need to have of your

* My inaugural series of seven lectures, published at the Clarendon Press.

own,—the others are placed, for reference, where they will be accessible to you.

5. In the 139th paragraph, p. 132, it states the order of your practical study in these terms:

"I wish you to begin by getting command of line; —that is to say, by learning to draw a steady line, limiting with absolute correctness the form or space you intend it to limit; to proceed by getting command over flat tints, so that you may be able to fill the spaces you have enclosed evenly, either with shade or colour, according to the school you adopt; and, finally, to obtain the power of adding such fineness of drawing, within the masses, as shall express their undulation, and their characters of form and texture."

And now, since in your course of practice you are first required to attain the power of drawing lines accurately and delicately, so in the course of theory, or grammar, I wish you first to learn the principles of linear design, exemplified by the schools which at the top of page 130 you will find characterized as the Schools of Line.

6. If I had command of as much time as I should like to spend with you on this subject, I would begin with the early forms of art which used the simplest linear elements of design. But, for general service and interest, it will be better that I should

sketch what has been accomplished by the greatest masters in that manner; the rather that their work is more or less accessible to all, and has developed into the vast industries of modern engraving, one of the most powerful existing influences of education and sources of pleasure among civilized people.

And this investigation, so far from interrupting, will facilitate our examination of the history of the nobler arts. You will see in the preface to my lectures on Greek sculpture that I intend them to be followed by a course on architecture, and that by one on Florentine sculpture. But the art of engraving is so manifestly, at Florence, though not less essentially elsewhere, a basis of style both in architecture and sculpture, that it is absolutely necessary I should explain to you in what the skill of the engraver consists, before I can define with accuracy that of more admired artists. For engraving, though not altogether in the method of which you see examples in the print-shops of the High Street, is, indeed, a prior art to that either of building or sculpture, and is an inseparable part of both, when they are rightly practised.

7. And while we thus examine the scope of this first of the arts, it will be necessary that we learn also the scope of mind of the early practisers of

it, and accordingly acquaint ourselves with the main events in the biography of the schools of Florence. To understand the temper and meaning of one great master is to lay the best, if not the only, foundation for the understanding of all; and I shall therefore make it the leading aim of this course of lectures to remind you of what is known, and direct you to what is knowable, of the life and character of the greatest Florentine master of engraving, Sandro Botticelli; and, incidentally, to give you some idea of the power of the greatest master of the German, or any northern, school, Hans Holbein.

8. You must feel, however, that I am using the word "engraving" in a somewhat different, and, you may imagine, a wider, sense, than that which you are accustomed to attach to it. So far from being a wider sense, it is in reality a more accurate and restricted one, while yet it embraces every conceivable right application of the art. And I wish, in this first lecture, to make entirely clear to you the proper meaning of the word, and proper range of the art of, engraving; in my next following lecture, to show you its place in Italian schools, and then, in due order, the place it ought to take in our own, and in all schools.

9. First then, to-day, of the Differentia, or es-

ential quality of Engraving, as distinguished from other arts.

What answer would you make to me, if I asked casually what engraving was? Perhaps the readiest which would occur to you would be, "The translation of pictures into black and white by means admitting reduplication of impressions." But if that be done by lithography, we do not call it engraving,—whereas we speak contentedly and continually of seal engraving, in which there is no question of black and white. And, as scholars, you know that this customary mode of speaking is quite accurate; and that engraving means, primarily, making a permanent cut or furrow in something. The central syllable of the word has become a sorrowful one, meaning the most permanent of furrows.

10. But are you prepared absolutely to accept this limitation with respect to engraving as a pictorial art? Will you call nothing an engraving, except a group of furrows or cavities cut in a hard substance? What shall we say of mezzotint engraving, for instance, in which, though indeed furrows and cavities are produced mechanically as a ground, the artist's work is in effacing them? And when we consider the power of engraving in representing pictures and multiplying them, are we to recognize and admire no effects of light and shade except

those which are visibly produced by dots or furrows? I mean, will the virtue of an engraving be in exhibiting these imperfect means of its effect, or in concealing them?

11. Here, for instance, is the head of a soldier by Durer,—a mere gridiron of black lines. Would this be better or worse engraving if it were more like a photograph or lithograph, and no lines seen? —suppose, more like the head of Mr. Santley, now in all the music-shops, and really quite deceptive in light and shade, when seen from over the way? Do you think Durer's work would be better if it were more like that? And would you have me, therefore, leaving the question of technical method of production altogether to the craftsman, consider pictorial engraving simply as the production of a light-and-shade drawing, by some method permitting its multiplication for the public?

12. This, you observe, is a very practical question indeed. For instance, the illustrations of my own lectures on sculpture are equivalent to permanent photographs. There can be little doubt that means will be discovered of thus producing perfect facsimiles of artists' drawings; so that, if no more than facsimile be required, the old art of cutting furrows in metal may be considered as, at this day, virtually ended. And, indeed, it is said that line engravers

cannot any more get apprentices, and that a pure steel or copper plate is not likely to be again produced, when once the old living masters of the bright field shall have been all laid in their earth-furrows.

13. Suppose, then, that this come to pass; and more than this, suppose that wood engraving also be superseded, and that instead of imperfect transcripts of drawings, on wood-blocks or metal-plates, photography enabled us to give, quite cheaply, and without limit to number, facsimiles of the finished light-and-shade drawings of artists themselves. Another group of questions instantly offers itself, on these new conditions; namely, What are the best means for a light-and-shade drawing—the pen, or the pencil, the charcoal, or the flat wash? That is to say, the pen, producing shade by black lines, as old engraving did; the pencil, producing shade by grey lines, variable in force; the charcoal, producing a smoky shadow with no lines in it, or the washed tint, producing a transparent shadow with no lines in it. Which of these methods is the best?—or have they, each and all, virtues to be separately studied, and distinctively applied?

14. See how curiously the questions multiply on us. 1st, Is engraving to be only considered as cut work? 2nd, For present designs multipliable without cutting, by the sunshine, what methods or instruments

of drawing will be best? And now, 3rdly, before we can discuss these questions at all, is there not another lying at the root of both,—namely, what a light-and-shade drawing itself properly *is*, and how it differs, or should differ, from a painting,—whether by mere deficiency, or by some entirely distinct merit?

15. For instance, you know how confidently it is said, in common talk about Turner, that his works are intelligible and beautiful when engraved, though incomprehensible as paintings. Admitting this to be so, do you suppose it is because the translation into light and shade is deficient in some qualities which the painting had, or that it possesses some quality which the painting had not? Does it please more because it is deficient in the colour which confused a feeble spectator, and offended a dogmatic one,—or because it possesses a decision in its steady linear labour which interprets, or corrects, the swift pencilling of the artist?

16. Do you notice the two words I have just used, *Decision*, and *Linear?*—Decision, again introducing the idea of cuts or divisions, as opposed to gradations; Linear, as opposed to massive or broad?

Yet we use all these words at different times in praise, while they evidently mark inconsistent qualities. Softness and decision, breadth and delineation, cannot co-exist in equal degrees. There must

in which there are no lines of importance, and no effect of light whatever; but all the pleasure given to the eye is in gaiety and variety of colour.

19. I say, the pleasure given to the *eye*. The lines on this vase write something; but the ornamentation produced by the beautiful writing is independent of its meaning. So the moonlight is pleasant, first, as light; and the figures, first, as colour. It is not the shape of the waves, but the light on them; not the expression of the figures, but their colour, by which the *ocular* pleasure is to be given.

These three examples are violently marked ones; but, in preparing to draw *any* object, you will find that, practically, you have to ask yourself, Shall I aim at the colour of it, the light of it, or the lines of it? You can't have all three; you can't even have any two out of the three in equal strength. The best art, indeed, comes so near nature as in a measure to unite all. But the best is not, and cannot be, as good as nature; and the mode of its deficiency is that it must lose some of the colour, some of the light, or some of the delineation. And in consequence, there is one great school which says, We will have the colour, and as much light and delineation as are consistent with it. Another which says, We will have shade, and as much colour and delineation as are consistent with it. The third, We will

have delineation, and as much colour and shade as are consistent with it.

20. And though much of the two subordinate qualities may in each school be consistent with the leading one, yet the schools are evermore separate: as, for instance, in other matters, one man says, I will have my fee, and as much honesty as is consistent with it; another, I will have my honesty, and as much fee as is consistent with it. Though the man who will have his fee be subordinately honest,—though the man who will have his honour, subordinately rich, are they not evermore of diverse schools?

So you have, in art, the utterly separate provinces, though in contact at their borders, of

The Delineators;
The Chiaroscurists; and
The Colourists.

21. The Delineators are the men on whom I am going to give you this course of lectures. They are essentially engravers, an engraved line being the best means of delineation. The Chiaroscurists are essentially draughtsmen with chalk, charcoal, or single tints. Many of them paint, but always with some effort and pain. Leonardo is the type of them; but the entire Dutch school consists of them, laboriously painting, without essential genius for colour.

The Colourists are the true painters; and all the faultless (as far, that is to say, as men's work can be so,) and consummate masters of art belong to them.

22. The distinction between the colourist and chiaroscurist school is trenchant and absolute; and may soon be shown you so that you will never forget it. Here is a Florentine picture by one of the pupils of Giotto, of very good representative quality, and which the University galleries are rich in possessing. At the distance at which I hold it, you see nothing but a chequer-work of brilliant, and, as it happens, even glaring colours. If you come near, you will find this patchwork resolve itself into a Visitation, and Birth of St. John; but that St. Elizabeth's red dress, and the Virgin's blue and white one, and the brown posts of the door, and the blue spaces of the sky, are painted in their own entirely pure colours, each shaded with more powerful tints of itself,—pale blue with deep blue, scarlet with crimson, yellow with orange, and green with richer green.

The whole is therefore as much a mosaic work of brilliant colour as if it were made of bits of glass. There is no effect of light attempted, or so much as thought of: you don't know even where the sun is; nor have you the least notion what time of day it is. The painter thinks you cannot be so superfluous as to want to know what time of day it is.

23. Here, on the other hand, is a Dutch picture of good average quality, also out of the University galleries. It represents a group of cattle, and a herdsman watching them. And you see in an instant that the time is evening. The sun is setting, and there is warm light on the landscape, the cattle, and the standing figure.

Nor does the picture in any conspicuous way seem devoid of colour. On the contrary, the herdsman has a scarlet jacket, which comes out rather brilliantly from the mass of shade round it; and a person devoid of colour faculty, or ill taught, might imagine the picture to be really a fine work of colour.

But if you will come up close to it, you will find that the herdsman has brown sleeves, though he has a scarlet jacket; and that the shadows of both are painted with precisely the same brown, and in several places with continuous touches of the pencil. It is only in the light that the scarlet is laid on.

This at once marks the picture as belonging to the lower or chiaroscurist school, even if you had not before recognized it as such by its pretty rendering of sunset effect.

24. You might at first think it a painting which showed greater skill than that of the school of Giotto. But the skill is not the primary question. The power of imagination is the first thing to be asked about.

This Italian work imagines, and requires you to imagine also, a St. Elizabeth and St. Mary, to the best of your power. But this Dutch one only wishes you to imagine an effect of sunlight on cow-skin, which is a far lower strain of the imaginative faculty.

Also, as you may see the effect of sunlight on cow-skin, in reality, any summer afternoon, but cannot so frequently see a St. Elizabeth, it is a far less useful strain of the imaginative faculty.

And, generally speaking, the Dutch chiaroscurists are indeed persons without imagination at all,—who, not being able to get any pleasure out of their thoughts, try to get it out of their sensations; note, however, also their technical connection with the Greek school of shade, (see my sixth inaugural lecture, p. 158,) in which colour was refused, not for the sake of deception, but of solemnity.

25. With these final motives you are not now concerned; your present business is the quite easy one of knowing, and noticing, the universal distinction between the methods of treatment in which the aim is light, and in which it is colour; and so to keep yourselves guarded from the danger of being misled by the, often very ingenious, talk of persons who have vivid colour sensations without having learned to distinguish them from what else pleases them in

pictures. There is an interesting volume by Professor Taine on the Dutch school, containing a valuable historical analysis of the influences which formed it; but full of the gravest errors, resulting from the confusion in his mind between colour and tone, in consequence of which he imagines the Dutch painters to be colourists.

26. It is so important for you to be grounded securely in these first elements of pictorial treatment, that I will be so far tedious as to show you one more instance of the relative intellectual value of the pure colour and pure chiaroscuro school, not in Dutch and Florentine, but in English art. Here is a copy of one of the lost frescoes of our Painted Chamber of Westminster;—fourteenth-century work, entirely conceived in colour, and calculated for decorative effect. There is no more light and shade in it than in a Queen of Hearts in a pack of cards;—all that the painter at first wants you to see is that the young lady has a white forehead, and a golden crown, and a fair neck, and a violet robe, and a crimson shield with golden leopards on it; and that behind her is clear blue sky. Then, farther, he wants you to read her name, "Debonnairete," which, when you have read, he farther expects you to consider what it is to be debonnaire, and to remember your Chaucer's description of the virtue:—

She was not brown, nor dun of hue,
But white as snowe, fallen new,
With eyen glad, and browes bent,
Her hair down to her heeles went,
And she was simple, as dove on tree,
Full debonnair of heart was she.

27. You see Chaucer dwells on the colour just as much as the painter does, but the painter has also given her the English shield to bear, meaning that good-humour, or debonnairete, cannot be maintained by self-indulgence;—only by fortitude. Farther note, with Chaucer, the "eyen glad," and brows "bent" (high-arched and calm), the strong life, (hair down to the heels,) and that her gladness is to be without subtlety,—that is to say, without the slightest pleasure in any form of advantage-taking, or any shrewd or mocking wit: "she was simple as dove on tree;" and you will find that the colour-painting, both in the fresco and in the poem, is in the very highest degree didactic and intellectual; and distinguished, as being so, from all inferior forms of art. Farther, that it requires you yourself first to understand the nature of simplicity, and to like simplicity in young ladies better than subtlety; and to understand why the second of Love's five kind arrows (Beauté being the first),

Simplece ot nom, la seconde
Qui maint homme parmi le monde
Et mainte dame fait amer.

Nor must you leave the picture without observing that there is another reason for Debonnairete's bearing the Royal shield,—of all shields that, rather than another. "De-bonne-aire" meant originally "out of a good eagle's nest," the "aire" signifying the eagle's nest or eyrie especially, because it is flat, the Latin "area" being the root of all.

And this coming out of a good nest is recognized as, of all things, needfullest to give the strength which enables people to be good-humoured; and thus you have "debonnaire" forming the third word of the group, with "gentle" and "kind," all first signifying "of good race."

You will gradually see, as we go on, more and more why I called my third volume of lectures Eagle's Nest; for I am not fantastic in these titles, as is often said; but try shortly to mark my chief purpose in the book by them.

28. Now for comparison with this old art, here is a modern engraving, in which colour is entirely ignored; and light and shade alone are used to produce what is supposed to be a piece of impressive religious instruction. But it is not a piece of religious instruction at all;—only a piece of religious sensation, prepared for the sentimental pleasure of young ladies; whom (since I am honoured to-day by the presence of many) I will take the opportunity

of warning against such forms of false theological satisfaction. This engraving represents a young lady in a very long and, though plain, very becoming white dress, tossed upon the waves of a terrifically stormy sea, by which neither her hair nor her becoming dress is in the least wetted; and saved from despair in that situation by closely embracing a very thick and solid stone Cross. By which far-sought and original metaphor young ladies are expected, after some effort, to understand the recourse they may have, for support, to the Cross of Christ, in the midst of the troubles of this world.

29. As those troubles are for the present, in all probability, limited to the occasional loss of their thimbles when they have not taken care to put them into their workboxes,—the concern they feel at the unsympathizing gaiety of their companions,—or perhaps the disappointment at not hearing a favourite clergyman preach,—(for I will not suppose the young ladies interested in this picture to be affected by any chagrin at the loss of an invitation to a ball, or the like worldliness,)—it seems to me the stress of such calamities might be represented, in a picture, by less appalling imagery. And I can assure my fair little lady friends,—if I still have any,—that whatever a young girl's ordinary troubles or annoyances may be, her true virtue is in shaking them off, as a rose-leaf

shakes off rain, and remaining debonnaire and bright in spirits, or even, as the rose would be, the brighter for the troubles; and not at all in allowing herself to be either drifted or depressed to the point of requiring religious consolation. But if any real and deep sorrow, such as no metaphor can represent, fall upon her, does she suppose that the theological advice of this piece of modern art can be trusted? If she will take the pains to think truly, she will remember that Christ Himself never says anything about holding by His Cross. He speaks a good deal of bearing it; but never for an instant of holding by it. It is His Hand, not His Cross, which is to save either you, or St. Peter, when the waves are rough. And the utterly reckless way in which modern religious teachers, whether in art or literature, abuse the metaphor somewhat briefly and violently leant on by St. Paul, simply prevents your understanding the meaning of any word which Christ Himself speaks on this matter! So you see this popular art of light and shade, catching you by your mere thirst of sensation, is not only undidactic, but the reverse of didactic—deceptive and illusory.

30. This *popular* art, you hear me say, scornfully; and I have told you, in some of my teaching in Aratra Pentelici, that all great art must be popular. Yes, but great art is popular, as bread and water are

to children fed by a father. And vile art is popular, as poisonous jelly is, to children cheated by a confectioner. And it is quite possible to make any kind of art popular on those last terms. The colour school may become just as poisonous as the colourless, in the hands of fools, or of rogues. Here is a book I bought only the other day,—one of the things got up cheap to catch the eyes of mothers at bookstalls, —Puss in Boots, illustrated; a most definite work of the colour school—red jackets and white paws and yellow coaches as distinct as Giotto or Raphael would have kept them. But the thing is done by fools for money, and becomes entirely monstrous and abominable. Here, again, is colour art produced by fools for religion: here is Indian sacred painting,—a black god with a hundred arms, with a green god on one side of him and a red god on the other; still a most definite work of the colour school. Giotto or Raphael could not have made the black more resolutely black, (though the whole colour of the school of Athens is kept in distinct separation from one black square in it), nor the green more unquestionably green. Yet the whole is pestilent and loathsome.

31. Now but one point more, and I have done with this subject for to-day.

You must not think that this manifest brilliancy and Harlequin's-jacket character is essential in the

colour school. The essential matter is only that everything should be of *its own* definite colour: it may be altogether sober and dark, yet the distinctness of hue preserved with entire fidelity. Here, for instance, is a picture of Hogarth's,—one of quite the most precious things we have in our galleries. It represents a meeting of some learned society—gentlemen of the last century, very gravely dressed, but who, nevertheless, as gentlemen pleasantly did in that day,—you remember Goldsmith's weakness on the point—wear coats of tints of dark red, blue, or violet. There are some thirty gentlemen in the room, and perhaps seven or eight different tints of subdued claret-colour in their coats; and yet every coat is kept so distinctly of its own proper claret-colour, that each gentleman's servant would know his master's.

Yet the whole canvas is so grey and quiet, that as I now hold it by this Dutch landscape, with the vermilion jacket, you would fancy Hogarth's had no colour in it at all, and that the Dutchman was half-way to becoming a Titian; whereas Hogarth's is a consummate piece of the most perfect colourist school, which Titian could not beat, in its way; and the Dutchman could no more paint half an inch of it than he could summon a rainbow into the clouds.

32. Here then, you see, are, altogether, five works, all of the absolutely pure colour school:—

1. One, Indian,—Religious Art;
2. One, Florentine,—Religious Art;
3. One, English,—from Painted Chamber, Westminster,—Ethic Art;
4. One, English,—Hogarth,—Naturalistic Art;
5. One, English,—to-day sold in the High Street,—Caricaturist Art.

And of these, the Florentine and old English are divine work, God-inspired; full, indeed, of faults and innocencies, but divine, as good children are.

Then this by Hogarth is entirely wise and right; but worldly-wise, not divine.

While the old Indian, and this, with which we feed our children at this hour, are entirely damnable art;—every bit of it done by the direct inspiration of the devil,—feeble, ridiculous,—yet mortally poisonous to every noble quality in body and soul.

33. I have now, I hope, guarded you sufficiently from the danger either of confusing the inferior school of chiaroscuro with that of colour, or of imagining that a work must necessarily be good, on the sole ground of its belonging to the higher group. I can now proceed securely to separate the third school, that of Delineation, from both; and to examine its special qualities.

It begins, (see Inaugural Lectures, § 137,) in the primitive work of races insensible alike to shade and to colour, and nearly devoid of thought and of sentiment, but gradually developing into both.

Now as the design is primitive, so are the means likely to be primitive. A line is the simplest work of art you can produce. What are the simplest means you can produce it with?

A Cumberland lead pencil is a work of art in itself, quite a nineteenth-century machine. Pen and ink are complex and scholarly; and even chalk or charcoal not always handy.

But the primitive line, the first and last, generally the best of lines, is that which you have elementary faculty of at your fingers' ends, and which kittens can draw as well as you—the scratch.

The first, I say, and the last of lines. Permanent exceedingly,—even in flesh, or on mahogany tables, often more permanent than we desire. But when studiously and honourably made, divinely permanent, or delightfully—as on the venerable desks of our public schools, most of them, now, specimens of wood engraving dear to the heart of England.

34. Engraving, then, is in brief terms, the Art of Scratch. It is essentially the cutting into a solid substance for the sake of making your ideas as permanent as possible,—graven with an iron pen

in the Rock for ever. *Permanence,* you observe, is the object, not multiplicability;—that is quite an accidental, sometimes not even a desirable, attribute of engraving. Duration of your work—fame, and the undeceived vision of all men, on the pane of glass of the window on a wet day, or on the pillars of the castle of Chillon, or on the walls of the pyramids;—a primitive art,—yet first and last with us.

Since then engraving, we say, is essentially cutting into the surface of any solid; as the primitive design is in lines or dots, the primitive cutting of such design is a scratch or a hole; and scratchable solids being essentially three—stone, wood, metal, —we shall have three great schools of engraving to investigate in each material.

35. On tablet of stone, on tablet of wood, on tablet of steel,—the first giving the law to everything; the second true Athenian, like Athena's first statue in olive-wood, making the law legible and homely; and the third true Vulcanian, having the splendour and power of accomplished labour.

Now of stone engraving, which is joined inseparably with sculpture and architecture, I am not going to speak at length in this course of lectures. I shall speak only of wood and metal engraving. But there is one circumstance in stone engraving which it is

necessary to observe in connection with the other two branches of the art.

The great difficulty for a primitive engraver is to make his scratch deep enough to be visible. Visibility is quite as essential to your fame as permanence; and if you have only your furrow to depend on, the engraved tablet, at certain times of day, will be illegible, and passed without notice.

But suppose you fill in your furrow with something black, then it will be legible enough at once; and if the black fall out or wash out, still your furrow is there, and may be filled again by anybody.

Therefore, the noble stone engravers, using marble to receive their furrow, fill that furrow with marble ink.

And you have an engraved plate to purpose;—with the whole sky for its margin! Look here—the front of the church of San Michele of Lucca,—white marble with green serpentine for ink; or here,—the steps of the Giant's Stair, with lead for ink; or here,—the floor of the Pisan Duomo, with porphyry for ink. Such cutting, filled in with colour or with black, branches into all sorts of developments,—Florentine mosaic on the one hand, niello on the other, and infinite minor arts.

36. Yet we must not make this filling with colour part of our definition of engraving. To engrave

is, in final strictness, "to decorate a surface with furrows." (Cameos, in accuratest terms, are minute sculptures, not engravings.) A ploughed field is the purest type of such art; and is, on hilly land, an exquisite piece of decoration.

Therefore it will follow that engraving distinguishes itself from ordinary drawing by greater need of muscular effort.

The quality of a pen drawing is to be produced easily,—deliberately, always,* but with a point that *glides* over the paper. Engraving, on the contrary, requires always force, and its virtue is that of a line produced by pressure, or by blows of a chisel.

It involves, therefore, always, ideas of power and dexterity, but also of restraint; and the delight you take in it should involve the understanding of the difficulty the workman dealt with. You perhaps doubt the extent to which this feeling justly extends, (in the first volume of "Modern Painters," expressed under the head "Ideas of Power.") But why is a large stone in any building grander than a small one? Simply because it was more difficult to raise it. So, also, an engraved line is, and ought to be, recognized as more grand than a pen or pencil line, because it was more difficult to execute it.

In this mosaic of Lucca front you forgive much,

* Compare Inaugural Lectures, § 144.

and admire much, because you see it is all cut in stone. So, in wood and steel, you ought to see that every line has been costly; but observe, costly of deliberative, no less than athletic or executive power. The main use of the restraint which makes the line difficult to draw, is to give time and motive for deliberation in drawing it, and to ensure its being the best in your power.

37. For, as with deliberation, so without repentance, your engraved line must be. It may, indeed, be burnished or beaten out again in metal, or patched and botched in stone; but always to disadvantage, and at pains which must not be incurred often. And there is a singular evidence in one of Durer's finest plates that, in his time, or at least in his manner of work, it was not possible at all. Among the disputes as to the meaning of Durer's Knight and Death, you will find it sometimes suggested, or insisted, that the horse's raised foot is going to fall into a snare. What has been fancied a noose is only the former outline of the horse's foot and limb, uneffaced.

The engraved line is therefore to be conclusive; not experimental. "I have determined this," says the engraver. Much excellent pen drawing is excellent in being tentative,—in being experimental. Indeterminate, not through want of meaning, but through fulness of it—halting *wisely* between two opinions—

feeling cautiously after clearer opinions. But your engraver has made up his opinion. This is so, and must for ever be so, he tells you. A very proper thing for a thoughtful man to say; a very improper and impertinent thing for a foolish one to say. Foolish engraving is consummately foolish work. Look,—all the world,—look for evermore, says the foolish engraver; see what a fool I have been. How many lines I have laid for nothing. How many lines upon lines, with no precept, much less super-precept.

38. Here, then, are two definite ethical characters in all engraved work. It is Athletic; and it is Resolute. Add one more; that it is Obedient;—in their infancy the nurse, but in their youth the slave, of the higher arts; servile, both in the mechanism and labour of it, and in its function of interpreting the schools of painting as superior to itself.

And this relation to the higher arts we will study at the source of chief power in all the normal skill of Christendom, Florence; and chiefly, as I said, in the work of one Florentine master, Sandro Botticelli.

LECTURE II.

THE RELATION OF ENGRAVING TO OTHER ARTS IN FLORENCE.

39. FROM what was laid before you in my last lecture, you must now be aware that I do not mean, by the word 'engraving,' merely the separate art of producing plates from which black pictures may be printed.

I mean, by engraving, the art of producing decoration on a surface by the touches of a chisel or a burin; and I mean by its relation to other arts, the subordinate service of this linear work, in sculpture, in metal work, and in painting; or in the representation and repetition of painting.

And first, therefore, I have to map out the broad relations of the arts of sculpture, metal work, and painting, in Florence, among themselves, during the period in which the art of engraving was distinctly connected with them.*

40. You will find, or may remember, that in my lecture on Michael Angelo and Tintoret I indicated

* Compare Aratra Pentelici, § 154.

the singular importance, in the history of art, of a space of forty years, between 1480, and the year in which Raphael died, 1520. Within that space of time the change was completed, from the principles of ancient, to those of existing, art;—a manifold change, not definable in brief terms, but most clearly characterized, and easily remembered, as the change of conscientious and didactic art, into that which proposes to itself no duty beyond technical skill, and no object but the pleasure of the beholder. Of that momentous change itself I do not purpose to speak in the present course of lectures; but my endeavour will be to lay before you a rough chart of the course of the arts in Florence up to the time when it took place; a chart indicating for you, definitely, the growth of conscience, in work which is distinctively conscientious, and the perfecting of expression and means of popular address, in that which is distinctively didactic.

41. Means of popular address, observe, which have become singularly important to us at this day. Nevertheless, remember that the power of printing, or reprinting, black *pictures*,—practically contemporary with that of reprinting black *letters*,—modified the art of the draughtsman only as it modified that of the scribe. Beautiful and unique writing, as beautiful and unique painting or en-

graving, remain exactly what they were; but other useful and reproductive methods of both have been superadded. Of these, it is acutely said by Dr. Alfred Woltmann,*—

"A far more important part is played in the art-life of Germany by the technical arts for the *multiplying* of works; for Germany, while it was the land of book-printing, is also the land of picture-printing. Indeed, wood-engraving, which preceded the invention of book-printing, *prepared the way for it, and only left one step more necessary for it. Book-printing* and *picture-printing* have both the same inner cause for their origin, namely, the impulse to make each mental gain a common blessing. Not merely princes and rich nobles were to have the privilege of adorning their private chapels and apartments with beautiful religious pictures; the poorest man was also to have his delight in that which the artist had devised and produced. It was not sufficient for him when it stood in the church as an altar-shrine, visible to him and to the congregation from afar; he desired to have it as his own, to carry it about with him, to bring it into his own home. The grand importance of wood-engraving and copperplate is not sufficiently estimated in historical investigations. They were not alone of use in the advance of art; they form an epoch in the entire life of mind and culture. The idea embodied and multiplied in pictures became like that embodied in the printed word, the herald of every intellectual movement, and conquered the world."

42. "Conquered the world"? The rest of the sentence is true, but this, hyperbolic, and greatly

* "Holbein and His Time," 4to, Bentley, 1872, (a very valuable book,) p. 17. Italics mine.

false. It should have been said that both painting and engraving have conquered much of the good in the world, and, hitherto, little or none of the evil.

Nor do I hold it usually an advantage to art, in teaching, that it *should* be common, or constantly seen. In becoming intelligibly and kindly beautiful, while it remains solitary and unrivalled, it has a greater power. Westminster Abbey is more didactic to the English nation, than a million of popular illustrated treatises on architecture.

Nay, even that it cannot be understood but with some difficulty, and must be sought before it can be seen, is no harm. The noblest didactic art is, as it were, set on a hill, and its disciples come to it. The vilest destructive and corrosive art stands at the street corners, crying, "Turn in hither; come, eat of my bread, and drink of my wine, which I have mingled."

And Dr. Woltmann has allowed himself too easily to fall into the common notion of Liberalism, that bad art, disseminated, is instructive, and good art isolated, not so. The question is, first, I assure you, whether what art you have got is good or bad. If essentially bad, the more you see of it, the worse for you. Entirely popular art is all that is noble, in the cathedral, the council chamber, and the market-

place; not the paltry coloured print pinned on the wall of a private room.

43. I despise the poor!—do I, think you? Not so. They only despise the poor who think them better off with police news, and coloured tracts of the story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife, than they were with Luini painting on their church walls, and Donatello carving the pillars of their market-places.

Nevertheless, the effort to be universally, instead of locally, didactic, modified advantageously, as you know, and in a thousand ways varied, the earlier art of engraving: and the development of its popular power, whether for good or evil, came exactly—so fate appointed—at a time when the minds of the masses were agitated by the struggle which closed in the Reformation in some countries, and in the desperate refusal of Reformation in others.* The two greatest masters of engraving whose lives we are to study, were, both of them, passionate reformers: Holbein no less than Luther; Botticelli no less than Savonarola.

44. Reformers, I mean, in the full and, accurately, the only, sense. Not preachers of new doctrines; but witnesses against the betrayal of the old ones, which were on the lips of all men, and in the lives of none.

* See Carlyle, Frederick, Book III., chap. viii.

Nay, the painters are indeed more pure reformers than the priests. They rebuked the manifest vices of men, while they realized whatever was loveliest in their faith. Priestly reform soon enraged itself into mere contest for personal opinions; while, without rage, but in stern rebuke of all that was vile in conduct or thought,—in declaration of the always-received faiths of the Christian Church, and in warning of the power of faith, and death,* over the petty designs of men,—Botticelli and Holbein together fought foremost in the ranks of the Reformation.

45. To-day I will endeavour to explain how they attained such rank. Then, in the next two lectures, the technics of both,—their way of speaking; and in the last two, what they had got to say.

First, then, we ask how they attained this rank; —who taught *them* what they were finally best to teach? How far must every people—how far did this Florentine people—teach its masters, before *they* could teach *it?*

Even in these days, when every man is, by hypo-

* I believe I am taking too much trouble in writing these lectures. This sentence, § 44, has cost me, I suppose, first and last, about as many hours as there are lines in it;—and my choice of these two words, faith and death, as representatives of power, will perhaps, after all, only puzzle the reader.

thesis, as good as another, does not the question sound strange to you? You recognize in the past, as you think, clearly, that national advance takes place always under the guidance of masters, or groups of masters, possessed of what appears to be some new personal sensibility or gift of invention; and we are apt to be reverent to these alone, as if the nation itself had been unprogressive, and suddenly awakened, or converted, by the genius of one man.

No idea can be more superficial. Every nation must teach its tutors, and prepare itself to receive them; but the fact on which our impression is founded—the rising, apparently by chance, of men whose singular gifts suddenly melt the multitude, already at the point of fusion; or suddenly form, and *in*form, the multitude which has gained coherence enough to be capable of formation,—enables us to measure and map the gain of national intellectual territory, by tracing first the lifting of the mountain chains of its genius.

46. I have told you that we have nothing to do at present with the great transition from ancient to modern habits of thought which took place at the beginning of the sixteenth century. I only want to go as far as that point;—where we shall find the old superstitious art represented *finally* by Perugino, and

the modern scientific and anatomical art represented *primarily* by Michael Angelo. And the epithet bestowed on Perugino by Michael Angelo, 'goffo nell' arte,' dunce, or blockhead, in art,—being, as far as my knowledge of history extends, the most cruel, the most false, and the most foolish insult ever offered by one great man to another,—does you at least good service, in showing how trenchant the separation is between the two orders of artists,*—how exclusively we may follow out the history of all the 'goffi nell' arte,' and write our Florentine Dunciad, and Laus Stultitiæ, in peace; and never trench upon the thoughts or ways of these proud ones, who showed their fathers' nakedness, and snatched their masters' fame.

47. The Florentine dunces in art are a multitude; but I only want you to know something about twenty of them.

Twenty!—you think that a grievous number? It may, perhaps, appease you a little to be told that when you really have learned a very little, accurately, about these twenty dunces, there are only five more men among the artists of Christendom whose works I shall ask you to examine while you are under

* He is said by Vasari to have called Francia the like. Francia is a child compared to Perugino; but a finished working-goldsmith and ornamental painter nevertheless; and one of the very last men to be called 'goffo,' except by unparalleled insolence.

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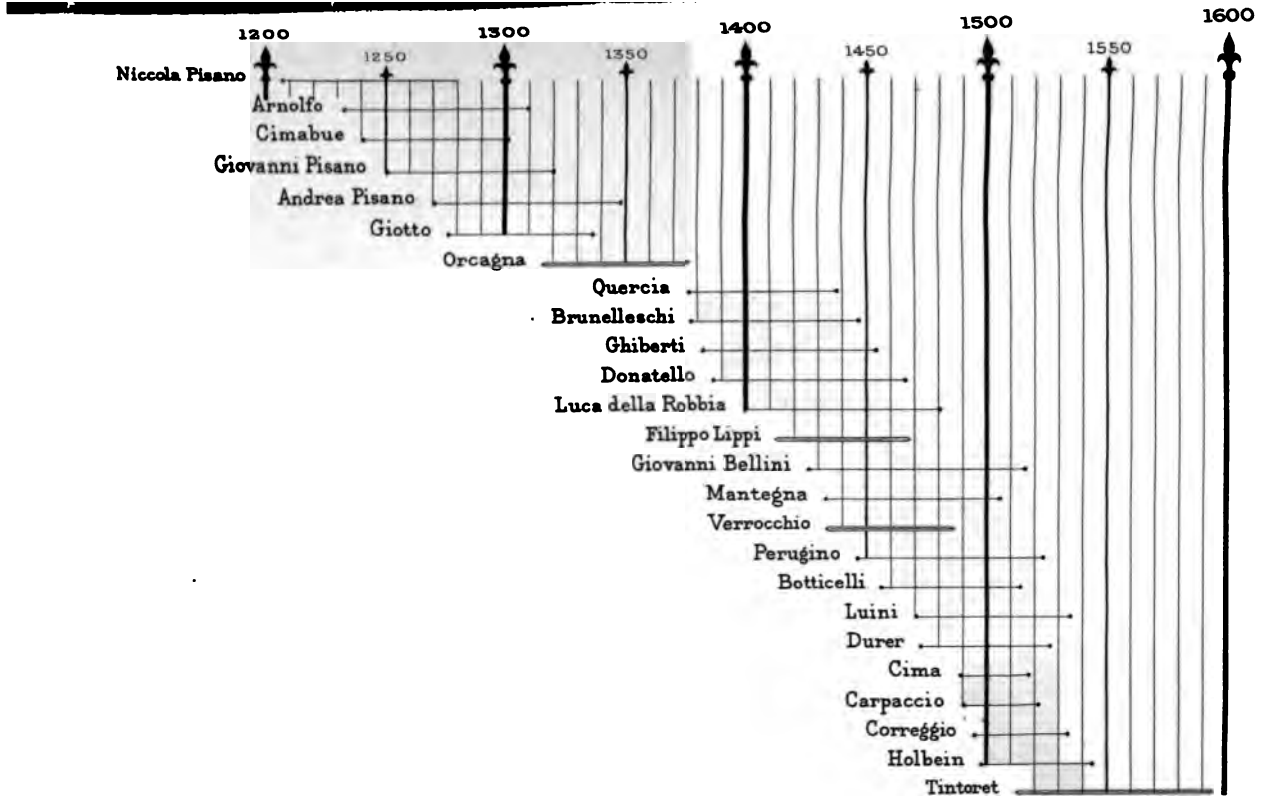
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1250
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Niccola Pisano
Arnolfo
Cimabue
Giovanni Pisano
Andrea Pisano
Giotto
Orcagna
Quercia
Brunelleschi
Ghiberti
Donatello
Luca della Robbia
Filippo Lippi
Giovanni Bellini
Mantegna
Verrocchio
Perugino
Botticelli
Luini
Durer
Cima
Carpaccio
Correggio
Holbein
Tintoret

my care. That makes twenty-five altogether,—an exorbitant demand on your attention, you still think? And yet, but a little while ago, you were all agog to get me to go and look at Mrs. A's sketches, and tell you what was to be thought about *them;* and I've had the greatest difficulty to keep Mrs. B's photographs from being shown side by side with the Raphael drawings in the University galleries. And you will waste any quantity of time in looking at Mrs. A's sketches or Mrs. B's photographs; and yet you look grave, because, out of nineteen centuries of European art-labour and thought, I ask you to learn something seriously about the works of five-and-twenty men!

48. It is hard upon you, doubtless, considering the quantity of time you must nowadays spend in trying which can hit balls farthest. So I will put the task into the simplest form I can.

Here are the names of the twenty-five men,* and opposite each, a line indicating the length of his life, and the position of it in his century. The diagram still, however, needs a few words of explanation. Very chiefly, for those who know anything of my writings, there is needed explanation of its not including the names of Titian, Reynolds, Velasquez, Turner, and

* The diagram used at the lecture is engraved on the opposite leaf; the reader had better draw it larger for himself, as it had to be made inconveniently small for this size of leaf.

other such men, always reverently put before you at other times.

They are absent, because I have no fear of your not looking at these. All your lives through, if you care about art, you will be looking at them. But while you are here at Oxford, I want to make you learn what you should know of these earlier, many of them weaker, men, who yet, for the very reason of their greater simplicity of power, are better guides for you, and of whom some will remain guides to all generations. And, as regards the subject of our present course, I have a still more weighty reason;—Vandyke, Gainsborough, Titian, Reynolds, Velasquez, and the rest, are essentially portrait painters. They give you the likeness of a man: they have nothing to say either about his future life, or his gods. 'That is the look of him,' they say: 'here, on earth, we know no more.'

49. But these, whose names I have engraved, have something to say—generally much,—either about the future life of man, or about his gods. They are therefore, literally, seers or prophets. False prophets, it may be, or foolish ones; of that you must judge; but you must read before you can judge; and read (or hear) them consistently; for you don't know them till you have heard them out. But with Sir Joshua, or Titian, one portrait

is as another: it is here a pretty lady, there a great lord; but speechless, all; — whereas, with these twenty-five men, each picture or statue is not merely another person of a pleasant society, but another chapter of a Sibylline book.

50. For this reason, then, I do not want Sir Joshua or Velasquez in my defined group; and for my present purpose, I can spare from it even four others: —namely, three who have *too* special gifts, and must each be separately studied—Correggio, Carpaccio, Tintoret;—and one who has no special gift, but a balanced group of many—Cima. This leaves twenty-one for classification, of whom I will ask you to lay hold thus. You must continually have felt the difficulty caused by the names of centuries not tallying with their years;—the year 1201 being the first of the 13th century, and so on. I am always plagued by it myself, much as I have to think and write with reference to chronology; and I mean for the future, in our art chronology, to use as far as possible a different form of notation.

51. In my diagram the vertical lines are the divisions of tens of years; the thick black lines divide the centuries. The horizontal lines, then, at a glance, tell you the length and date of each artist's life. In one or two instances I cannot find the date of birth; in one or two more, of death; and the line indicates

then only the ascertained* period during which the artist worked.

And, thus represented, you see nearly all their lives run through the year of a new century; so that if the lines representing them were needles, and the black bars of the years 1300, 1400, 1500 were magnets, I could take up nearly all the needles by lifting the bars.

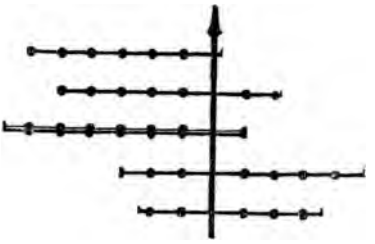
52. I will actually do this, then, in three other simple diagrams. I place a rod for the year 1300 over the lines of life, and I take up all it touches. I have to drop Niccola Pisano, but I catch five. Now, with my rod of 1400, I have dropped Orcagna indeed, but I again catch five. Now, with my rod of 1500, I indeed drop Filippo Lippi and Verrochio, but I catch seven. And here I have three pennons, with the staves of the years 1300, 1400, and 1500 running through them,—holding the names of nearly all the men I want you to study in easily remembered groups of five, five, and seven. And these three groups I shall hereafter call the 1300 group, 1400 group, and 1500 group.

53. But why should four unfortunate masters be dropped out?

* 'Ascertained,' scarcely any date ever is, quite satisfactorily. The diagram only represents what is practically and broadly true. I may have to modify it greatly in detail.

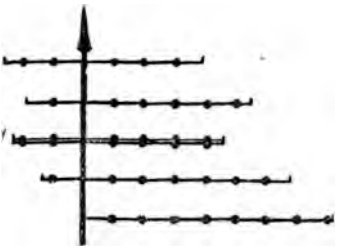
1300.

1240—1302 Cimabue
1250—1321 Giovanni Pisano
1232—1310 ARNOLFO
1270—1345 Andrea Pisano
1276—1336 Giotto



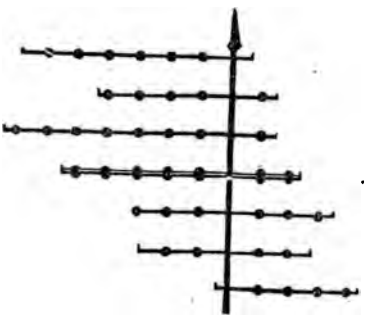
1400.

1374—1438 Quercia
1381—1455 Ghiberti
1377—1446 BRUNELLESCHI
1386—1468 Donstello
1400—1481 Luca



1500.

1431—1506 Mantegna
1457—1515 Botticelli
1426—1516 Bellini
1446—1524 PERUGINO
1470—1535 Luini
1471—1527 Durer
1498—1543 Holbein



Well, I want to drop them out, at any rate; but not in disrespect. In hope, on the contrary, to make you remember them very separately indeed; —for this following reason.

We are in the careless habit of speaking of men who form a great number of pupils, and have a host of inferior satellites round them, as masters of great schools.

But before you call a man a master, you should ask, Are his pupils greater or less than himself? If they are greater than himself, he is a master indeed; —he has been a true teacher. But if all his pupils are less than himself, he may have been a great *man*, but in all probability has been a bad *master*, or no master.

Now these men, whom I have signally left out of my groups, are true *Masters*.

Niccola Pisano taught all Italy; but chiefly his own son, who succeeded, and in some things very much surpassed him.

Orcagna taught all Italy, after him, down to Michael Angelo. And these two—Lippi, the religious schools, Verrocchio, the artist schools, of their century.

Lippi taught Sandro Botticelli; and Verrocchio taught Leonardo da Vinci, Lorenzo di Credi, and Perugino. Have I not good reason to separate

the masters of such pupils from the schools they created?

54. But how is it that I can drop just the cards I want out of my pack?

Well, certainly I force and fit matters a little: I leave some men out of my list whom I should like to have in it;—Benozzo, Gozzoli, for instance, and Mino da Ficsole; but I can do without them, and so can you also, for the present. I catch Luca by a hair's-breadth only, with my 1400 rod; but on the whole, with very little coaxing, I get the groups in this memorable and quite literally 'handy' form. For see, I write my lists of five, five, and seven, on bits of pasteboard; I hinge my rods to these; and you can brandish the school of 1400 in your left hand, and of 1500 in your right, like—railway signals;—and I wish all railway signals were as clear. Once learn, thoroughly, the groups in this artificially contracted form, and you can refine and complete afterwards at your leisure.

55. And thus actually flourishing my two pennons, and getting my grip of the men, in either hand, I find a notable thing concerning my two flags. The men whose names I hold in my left hand are all sculptors; the men whose names I hold in my right are all painters.

You will infallibly suspect me of having chosen

them thus on purpose. No, honour bright!—I chose simply the greatest men,—those I wanted to talk to you about. I arranged them by their dates; I put them into three conclusive pennons; and behold what follows!

56. Farther, note this: in the 1300 group, four out of the five men are architects as well as sculptors and painters. In the 1400 group, there is one architect; in the 1500, none. And the meaning of that is, that in 1300 the arts were all united, and duly led by architecture; in 1400, sculpture began to assume too separate a power to herself; in 1500, painting arrogated all, and, at last, betrayed all. From which, with much other collateral evidence, you may justly conclude that the three arts ought to be practised together, and that they naturally are so. I long since asserted that no man could be an architect who was not a sculptor. As I learned more and more of my business, I perceived also that no man could be a sculptor who was not an architect;—that is to say, who had not knowledge enough, and pleasure enough in structural law, to be able to build, on occasion, better than a mere builder. And so, finally, I now positively aver to you that nobody, in the graphic arts, can be quite rightly a master of anything, who is not master of everything!

57. The junction of the three arts in men's minds,

at the best times, is shortly signified in these words of Chaucer. Love's Garden,

> Everidele
> Enclosed was, and walled well
> With high walls, embatailled,
> Portrayed without, and well entayled
> With many rich portraitures.

The French original is better still, and gives four arts in unison :—

> Quant suis avant un pou alé
> Et vy un vergier grant et le,
> Bien cloz de bon mur batillié
> Pourtrait dehors, et entaillié
> Ou (for au) maintes riches escriptures.

Read also carefully the description of the temples of Mars and Venus in the Knight's Tale. Contemporary French uses 'entaille' even of solid sculpture and of the living form; and Pygmalion, as a perfect master, professes wood carving, ivory carving, wax-work, and iron-work, no less than stone sculpture :—

> Pimalion, uns entaillieres
> Pourtraians en fuz* et en pierres,
> En mettaux, en os, et en cire,
> Et en toute autre matire.

58. I made a little sketch, when last in Florence, of a subject which will fix the idea of this unity of

* For fust, log of wood, erroneously 'fer' in the later printed editions. Compare the account of the works of Art and Nature, towards the end of the Romance of the Rose.

the arts in your minds. At the base of the tower of Giotto are two rows of hexagonal panels, filled with bas-reliefs. Some of these are by unknown hands, —some by Andrea Pisano, some by Luca della Robbia, two by Giotto himself; of these I sketched the panel representing the art of Painting.

You have in that bas-relief one of the foundation-stones of the most perfectly-built tower in Europe; you have that stone carved by its architect's own hand; you find, further, that this architect and sculptor was the greatest painter of his time, and the friend of the greatest poet; and you have represented by him a painter in his shop,—bottega,—as symbolic of the entire art of painting.

59. In which representation, please note how carefully Giotto shows you the tabernacles, or niches, in which the paintings are to be placed. Not independent of their frames, these panels of his, you see!

Have you ever considered, in the early history of painting, how important also is the history of the frame maker? It is a matter, I assure you, needing your very best consideration. For the frame was made before the picture. The painted window is much, but the aperture it fills was thought of before it. The fresco by Giotto is much, but the vault it adorns was planned first. Who thought of these;—who built?

Questions taking us far back before the birth of the shepherd boy of Fesolé,—questions not to be answered by history of painting only, still less of painting in *Italy* only.

60. And in pointing out to you this fact, I may once for all prove to you the essential unity of the arts, and show you how impossible it is to understand one without reference to another. Which I wish you to observe all the more closely, that you may use, without danger of being misled, the data, of unequalled value, which have been collected by Crowe and Cavalcasella, in the book which they have called a History of Painting in Italy, but which is in fact only a dictionary of details relating to that history. Such a title is an absurdity on the face of it. For, first, you can no more write the history of painting in Italy than you can write the history of the south wind in Italy. The sirocco does indeed produce certain effects at Genoa, and others at Rome; but what would be the value of a treatise upon the winds, which, for the honour of any country, assumed that every city of it had a native sirocco?

But, further,—imagine what success would attend the meteorologist who should set himself to give an account of the south wind, but take no notice of the north!

And, finally, suppose an attempt to give you an account of either wind, but none of the seas, or mountain passes, by which they were nourished, or directed.

61. For instance, I am in this course of lectures to give you an account of a single and minor branch of graphic art,—engraving. But observe how many references to local circumstances it involves. There are three materials for it, we said;—stone, wood, and metal. Stone engraving is the art of countries possessing marble and gems; wood engraving, of countries overgrown with forest; metal engraving, of countries possessing treasures of silver and gold. And the style of a stone engraver is formed on pillars and pyramids; the style of a wood engraver under the eaves of larch cottages; the style of a metal engraver in the treasuries of kings. Do you suppose I could rightly explain to you the value of a single touch on brass by Finiguerra, or on box by Bewick, unless I had grasp of the great laws of climate and country; and could trace the inherited sirocco or tramontana of thought to which the souls and bodies of the men owed their existence?

62. You see that in this flag of 1300 there is a dark strong line in the centre, against which you read the name of Arnolfo.

In writing our Florentine Dunciad, or History of Fools, can we possibly begin with a better day than All Fools' Day? On All Fools' Day—the first, if you like better so to call it, of the month of *opening*,—in the year 1300, is signed the document making Arnolfo a citizen of Florence, and in 1310 he dies, chief master of the works of the cathedral there. To this man, Crowe and Cavalcasella give half a page, out of three volumes of five hundred pages each.

But lower down in my flag, (not put there because of any inferiority, but by order of chronology,) you will see a name sufficiently familiar to you—that of Giotto; and to him, our historians of painting in Italy give some hundred pages, under the impression, stated by them at page 243 of their volume, that "in his hands, art in the Peninsula became entitled for the first time to the name of Italian."

63. Art became Italian! Yes, but *what* art? Your authors give a perspective—or what they call such, —of the upper church of Assisi, as if that were merely an accidental occurrence of blind walls for Giotto to paint on!

But how came the upper church of Assisi there? How came it to be vaulted—to be aisled? How came Giotto to be asked to paint upon it?

The art that built it, good or bad, must have been an Italian one, before Giotto. He could not have painted on the air. Let us see how his panels were made for him.

64. This Captain—the centre of our first group—Arnolfo, has always hitherto been called 'Arnolfo di Lapo;'—Arnolfo the son of Lapo.

Modern investigators come down on us delightedly, to tell us—Arnolfo was *not* the son of Lapo.

In these days you will have half a dozen doctors, writing each a long book, and the sense of all will be,—Arnolfo wasn't the son of Lapo. Much good may you get of that!

Well, you will find the fact to be, there was a great Northman builder, a true son of Thor, who came down into Italy in 1200, served the order of St. Francis there, built Assisi, taught Arnolfo how to build, with Thor's hammer, and disappeared, leaving his name uncertain—Jacopo—Lapo—nobody knows what. Arnolfo always recognizes this man as his true father, who put the soul-life into him; he is known to his Florentines always as Lapo's Arnolfo.

That, or some likeness of that, is the vital fact. You never can get at the literal limitation of living facts. They disguise themselves by the very strength of their life: get told again and again in different ways by all manner of people;—the literalness of

them is turned topsy-turvy, inside-out, over and over again;—then the fools come and read them wrong side upwards, or else, say there never was a fact at all. Nothing delights a true blockhead so much as to prove a negative;—to show that everybody has been wrong. Fancy the delicious sensation, to an empty-headed creature, of fancying for a moment that he has emptied everybody else's head as well as his own! nay, that, for once, his own hollow bottle of a head has had the best of other bottles, and has been *first* empty; first to know—nothing.

65. Hold, then, steadily the first tradition about this Arnolfo. That his real father was called "Cambio" matters to you not a straw. That he never called himself Cambio's Arnolfo—that nobody else ever called him so, down to Vasari's time, is an infinitely significant fact to you. In my twenty-second letter in Fors Clavigera you will find some account of the noble habit of the Italian artists to call themselves by their master's names, considering their master as their true father. If not the name of the master, they take that of their native place, as having owed the character of their life to that. They rarely take their own family name: sometimes it is not even known,—when best known, it is unfamiliar to us. The great Pisan artists, for instance, never bear

any other name than 'the Pisan;' among the other five-and-twenty names in my list, not above six, I think, the two German, with four Italian, are family names. Perugino, (Peter of Perugia), Luini, (Bernard of Luino), Quercia, (James of Quercia), Correggio, (Anthony of Correggio), are named from their native places. Nobody would have understood me if I had called Giotto, 'Ambrose Bondone;' or Tintoret, Robusti; or even Raphael, Sanzio. Botticelli is named from his master; Ghiberti from his father-in-law; and Ghirlandajo from his work. Orcagna, who *did*, for a wonder, name himself from his father, Andrea Cione, of Florence, has been always called 'Angel' by everybody else; while Arnolfo, who never named himself from his father, is now like to be fathered against his will.

But, I again beg of you, keep to the old story. For it represents, however inaccurately in detail, clearly in sum, the fact, that some great master of German Gothic at this time came down into Italy, and changed the entire form of Italian architecture by his touch. So that while Niccola and Giovanni Pisano are still virtually Greek artists, experimentally introducing Gothic forms, Arnolfo and Giotto adopt the entire Gothic ideal of form, and thenceforward use the pointed arch and steep gable as the limits of sculpture.

66. Hitherto I have been speaking of the relations of my twenty-five men to each other. But now, please note their relations altogether to the art before them. These twenty-five include, I say, all the great masters of *Christian* art.

Before them, the art was too savage to be Christian; afterwards, too carnal to be Christian.

Too savage to be Christian? I will justify that assertion hereafter; but you will find that the European art of 1200 includes all the most developed and characteristic conditions of the style in the north which you have probably been accustomed to think of as NORMAN, and which you may always most conveniently call so; and the most developed conditions of the style in the south, which, formed out of effete Greek, Persian, and Roman tradition, you may, in like manner, most conveniently express by the familiar word BYZANTINE. Whatever you call them, they are in origin adverse in temper, and remain so up to the year 1200. Then an influence appears, seemingly that of one man, Nicholas the Pisan, (our first MASTER, observe,) and a new spirit adopts what is best in each, and gives to what it adopts a new energy of its own, namely, this conscientious and didactic power which is the speciality of its progressive existence. And just as the newborn and natural art of Athens collects and re-

animates Pelasgian and Egyptian tradition, purifying their worship, and perfecting their work, into the living heathen faith of the world, so this new-born and natural art of Florence collects and animates the Norman and Byzantine tradition, and forms out of the perfected worship and work of both, the honest Christian faith, and vital craftsmanship, of the world.

67. Get this first summary, therefore, well into your minds. The word 'Norman' I use roughly for North-savage; — roughly, but advisedly. I mean Lombard, Scandinavian, Frankish; everything north-savage that you can think of, except Saxon. (I have a reason for that exception; never mind it just now.)*

All north-savage I call NORMAN, all south-savage I call BYZANTINE; this latter including dead native Greek primarily—then dead foreign Greek, in Rome; —then Arabian—Persian—Phœnician—Indian—all you can think of, in art of hot countries, up to this year 1200, I rank under the one term Byzantine. Now all this cold art—Norman, and all this hot art—Byzantine, is virtually dead, till 1200. It has

* Of course it would have been impossible to express in any accurate terms, short enough for the compass of a lecture, the conditions of opposition between the Heptarchy and the Northmen;—between the Byzantine and Roman;—and between the Byzantine and Arab, which form minor, but not less trenchant, divisions of Art-province, for subsequent delineation. If you can refer to my "Stones of Venice," see § 20 of its first chapter.

no conscience, no didactic power;* it is devoid of both, in the sense that dreams are.

Then in the 13th century, men wake as if they heard an alarum through the whole vault of heaven, and true human life begins again, and the cradle of this life is the Val d'Arno. There the northern and southern nations meet; there they lay down their enmities; there they are first baptized unto John's baptism for the remission of sins; there is born, and thence exiled,—thought faithless for breaking the font of baptism to save a child from drowning, in his 'bel San Giovanni,'—the greatest of Christian poets; he who had pity even for the lost.

68. Now, therefore, my whole history of *Christian* architecture and painting begins with this Baptistery of Florence, and with its associated Cathedral. Arnolfo brought the one into the form in which you now see it; he laid the foundation of the other, and that to purpose, and he is therefore the CAPTAIN of our first school.

For this Florentine Baptistery† is the great one of

* Again much too broad a statement: not to be qualified but by a length of explanation here impossible. My lectures on Architecture, now in preparation, will contain further detail.

† At the side of my page, here, I find the following memorandum, which was expanded in the viva-voce lecture. The reader must make what he can of it, for I can't expand it here.

Sense of Italian Church plan.

Baptistery, to make Christians in; house, or dome, for them to pray

the world. Here is the centre of Christian knowledge and power.

And it is one piece of large *engraving*. White substance, cut into, and filled with black, and dark-green.

No more perfect work was afterwards done; and I wish you to grasp the idea of this building clearly and irrevocably,—first, in order (as I told you in a previous lecture) to quit yourselves thoroughly of the idea that ornament should be decorated construction; and, secondly, as the noblest type of the intaglio ornamentation, which developed itself into all minor application of black and white to engraving.

69. That it should do so first at Florence, was the natural sequence, and the just reward, of the ancient skill of Etruria in chased metal-work. The effects produced in gold, either by embossing or engraving, were the direct means of giving interest to his surfaces at the command of the 'auri faber,' or orfevre: and every conceivable artifice of studding, chiselling, and interlacing was exhausted by the artists in gold, who were at the head of the metal-workers, and from whom the ranks of the sculptors were reinforced.

and be preached to in; bell-tower, to ring all over the town, when they were either to pray together, rejoice together, or to be warned of danger.

Harvey's picture of the Covenanters, with a shepherd on the outlook, as a campanile.

The old French word 'orfroiz,' (aurifrigia,) expresses essentially what we call 'frosted' work in gold; that which resembles small dew or crystals of hoar-frost; the 'frigia' coming from the Latin frigus. To chase, or enchase, is not properly said of the gold; but of the jewel which it secures with hoops or ridges, (French, *en*chasser*). Then the armourer, or cup and casket maker, added to this kind of decoration that of flat inlaid enamel; and the silver-worker, finding that the raised filigree (still a staple at Genoa) only attracted tarnish, or got crushed, early sought to decorate a surface which would bear external friction, with labyrinths of safe incision.

70. Of the *security* of incision as a means of permanent decoration, as opposed to ordinary carving, here is a beautiful instance in the base of one of the external shafts of the Cathedral of Lucca; 13th-century work, which by this time, had it been carved in relief, would have been a shapeless remnant of indecipherable bosses. But it is still as safe as if it had been cut yesterday, because the smooth round mass of the pillar is entirely undisturbed; into that, furrows are cut with a chisel as much under command and as powerful as a burin. The effect of the design is trusted entirely to the depth of these incisions—here dying out and expiring in the light of

* And 'chassis,' a window frame, or tracery.

the marble, there deepened, by drill holes, into as definitely a black line as if it were drawn with ink; and describing the outline of the leafage with a delicacy of touch and of perception which no man will ever surpass, and which very few have rivalled, in the proudest days of design.

71. This security, in silver plates, was completed by filling the furrows with the black paste which at once exhibited and preserved them. The transition from that niello-work to modern engraving is one of no real moment: my object is to make you understand the qualities which constitute the *merit* of the engraving, whether charged with niello or ink. And this I hope ultimately to accomplish by studying with you some of the works of the four men, Botticelli and Mantegna in the south, Durer and Holbein in the north, whose names I have put in our last flag, above and beneath those of the three mighty painters, Perugino the captain, Bellini on one side—Luini on the other.

The four following lectures* will contain data necessary for such study: you must wait longer before I can place before you those by which I

* This present lecture does not, as at present published, justify its title; because I have not thought it necessary to write the viva-voce portions of it which amplified the 69th paragraph. I will give the substance of them in better form elsewhere; meantime the part of the lecture here given may be in its own way useful.

can justify what must greatly surprise some of my audience—my having given Perugino the captain's place among the three painters.

72. But I do so, at least primarily, because what is commonly thought affected in his design is indeed the true remains of the great architectual symmetry which was soon to be lost, and which makes him the true follower of Arnolfo and Brunelleschi; and because he is a sound craftsman and workman to the very heart's core. A noble, gracious, and quiet labourer from youth to death,—never weary, never impatient, never untender, never untrue. Not Tintoret in power, not Raphael in flexibility, not Holbein in veracity, not Luini in love,—their gathered gifts he has, in balanced and fruitful measure, fit to be the guide, and impulse, and father of all.

LECTURE III.

THE TECHNICS OF WOOD ENGRAVING.

73. I AM to-day to begin to tell you what it is necessary you should observe respecting methods of manual execution in the two great arts of engraving. Only to *begin* to tell you. There need be no end of telling you such things, if you care to hear them. The theory of art is soon mastered; but 'dal detto al fatto, v'e gran tratto;' and as I have several times told you in former lectures, every day shows me more and more the importance of the Hand.

74. Of the hand as a Servant, observe,—not of the hand as a Master. For there are two great kinds of manual work: one in which the hand is continually receiving and obeying orders; the other in which it is acting independently, or even giving orders of its own. And the dependent and submissive hand is a noble hand; but the independent or imperative hand is a vile one.

That is to say, as long as the pen, or chisel, or other graphic instrument, is moved under the direct

influence of mental attention, and obeys orders of the brain, it is working nobly;—the moment it moves independently of them, and performs some habitual dexterity of its own, it is base.

75. *Dexterity*—I say;—some 'right-handedness' of its own. We might wisely keep that word for what the hand does at the mind's bidding; and use an opposite word—sinisterity,—for what it does at its own. For indeed we want such a word in speaking of modern art;—it is all full of sinisterity. Hands independent of brains;—the left hand, by division of labour, not knowing what the right does,—still less what it ought to do.

76. Turning, then, to our special subject. All engraving, I said, is intaglio in the solid. But the solid, in wood engraving, is a coarse substance, easily cut; and in metal, a fine substance, not easily. Therefore, in general, you may be prepared to accept ruder and more elementary work in one than the other; and it will be the means of appeal to blunter minds.

You probably already know the difference between the actual methods of producing a printed impression from wood and metal; but I may perhaps make the matter a little more clear. In metal engraving, you cut ditches, fill them with ink, and press your paper into them. In wood engraving, you

leave ridges, rub the tops of them with ink, and stamp them on your paper.

The instrument with which the substance, whether of the wood or steel, is cut away, is the same. It is a solid ploughshare, which, instead of throwing the earth aside, throws it up and out, producing at first a simple ravine, or furrow, in the wood or metal, which you can widen by another cut, or extend by successive cuts. This (Fig. 1) is the general shape of the solid ploughshare:

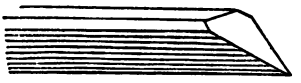


FIG. 1.

but it is of course made sharper or blunter at pleasure. The furrow produced is at first the wedge-shaped or cuneiform ravine, already so much dwelt upon in my lectures on Greek sculpture.

77. Since, then, in wood printing, you print from the surface left solid; and, in metal printing, from the hollows cut into it, it follows that if you put few touches on wood, you draw, as on a slate, with white lines, leaving a quantity of black; but if you put few touches on metal, you draw with black lines, leaving a quantity of white.

Now the eye is not in the least offended by quantity of white, but is, or ought to be, greatly

saddened and offended by quantity of black. Hence it follows that you must never put little work on wood. You must not sketch upon it. You may sketch on metal as much as you please.

78. "Paradox," you will say, as usual. "Are not all our journals,—and the best of them, Punch, par excellence,—full of the most brilliantly swift and slight sketches, engraved on wood; while line-engravings take ten years to produce, and cost ten guineas each when they are done?"

Yes, that is so; but observe, in the first place, what appears to you a sketch on wood is not so at all, but a most laborious and careful imitation of a sketch on paper; whereas when you see what appears to be a sketch on metal, it *is* one. And in the second place, so far as the popular fashion is contrary to this natural method,—so far as we do in reality try to produce effects of sketching in wood, and of finish in metal,—our work is wrong.

Those apparently careless and free sketches on the wood ought to have been stern and deliberate; those exquisitely toned and finished engravings on metal ought to have looked, instead, like free ink sketches on white paper. That is the theorem which I propose to you for consideration, and which, in the two branches of its assertion, I hope to prove to you; the first part of it, (that wood-cutting should be careful,)

in this present lecture; the second, (that metal-cutting should be, at least in a far greater degree than it is now, slight, and free,) in the following one.

79. Next, observe the distinction in respect of *thickness*, no less than number, of lines which may properly be used in the two methods.

In metal engraving, it is easier to lay a fine line than a thick one; and however fine the line may be, it lasts;—but in wood engraving it requires extreme precision and skill to leave a thin dark line, and when left, it will be quickly beaten down by a careless printer. Therefore, the virtue of wood engraving is to exhibit the qualities and power of *thick* lines; and of metal engraving, to exhibit the qualities and power of *thin* ones.

All thin dark lines, therefore, in wood, broadly speaking, are to be used only in case of necessity; and thick lines, on metal, only in case of necessity.

80. Though, however, thin *dark* lines cannot easily be produced in wood, thin *light* ones may be struck in an instant. Nevertheless, even thin light ones must not be used, except with extreme caution. For observe, they are equally useless as outline, and for expression of mass. You know how far from exemplary or delightful your boy's first quite voluntary exercises in white line drawing on your slate were? You could, indeed, draw a goblin satis-

factorily in such method;—a round O, with arms and legs to it, and a scratch under two dots in the middle, would answer the purpose; but if you wanted to draw a pretty face, you took pencil or pen, and paper—not your slate. Now, that instinctive feeling that a white outline is wrong, is deeply founded. For Nature herself draws with diffused light, and concentrated dark;—never, except in storm or twilight, with diffused dark, and concentrated light; and the thing we all like best to see drawn —the human face—cannot be drawn with white touches, but by extreme labour. For the pupil and iris of the eye, the eyebrow, the nostril, and the lip are all set in dark on pale ground. You can't draw a white eyebrow, a white pupil of the eye, a white nostril, and a white mouth, on a dark ground. Try it, and see what a spectre you get. But the same number of dark touches, skilfully applied, will give the idea of a beautiful face. And what is true of the subtlest subject you have to represent, is equally true of inferior ones. Nothing lovely can be quickly represented by white touches. You must hew out, if your means are so restricted, the form by sheer labour; and that both cunning and dextrous. The Florentine masters, and Durer, often practise the achievement, and there are many drawings by the Lippis, Mantegna, and

other leading Italian draughtsmen, completed to great perfection with the white line; but only for the sake of severest study, nor is their work imitable by inferior men. And such studies, however accomplished, always mark a disposition to regard chiaroscuro too much, and local colour too little.

We conclude, then, that we must never trust, in wood, to our power of outline with white; and our general laws, thus far determined, will be—thick lines in wood; thin ones in metal; complete drawing on wood; sketches, if we choose, on metal.

81. But why, in wood, lines at all? Why not cut out white *spaces*, and use the chisel as if its incisions were so much white paint? Many fine pieces of wood-cutting are indeed executed on this principle. Bewick does nearly all his foliage so; and continually paints the light plumes of his birds with single touches of his chisel, as if he were laying on white.

But this is not the finest method of wood-cutting. It implies the idea of a system of light and shade in which the shadow is totally black. Now, no light and shade can be good, much less pleasant, in which all the shade is stark black. Therefore the finest wood-cutting ignores light and shade, and expresses only form, and *dark local colour*. And it is convenient, for simplicity's sake, to an-

ticipate what I should otherwise defer telling yo until next lecture, that fine metal engraving, lik fine wood-cutting, ignores light and shade; an that, in a word, all good engraving whatsoever doe so.

82. I hope that my saying so will make yo eager to interrupt me. 'What! Rembrandt' etchings, and Lupton's mezzotints, and Le Keux' line work,—do you mean to tell us that thes ignore light and shade?'

I never said that *mezzotint* ignored light an shade, or ought to do so. Mezzotint is properl to be considered as chiaroscuro drawing on meta But I do mean to tell you that both Rembrandt' etchings, and Le Keux's finished line-work, ar misapplied labour, in so far as they regard chia roscuro; and that consummate engraving never use it as a primal element of pleasure.

83. We have now got our principles so far define that I can proceed to illustration of them by ex ample.

Here are facsimiles, very marvellous ones,* of tw of the best wood engravings ever produced by a —two subjects in Holbein's Dance of Death. Yo

* By Mr. Burgess. The toil and skill necessary to produce a fa simile of this degree of precision will only be recognized by the read who has had considerable experience of actual work.

will probably like best that I should at once proceed to verify my last and most startling statement, that fine engraving disdained chiaroscuro.

This vignette (Fig. 2) represents a sunset in the open mountainous fields of southern Germany. And Holbein is so entirely careless about the light and shade, which a Dutchman would first have thought of, as resulting from the sunset, that, as he works, he forgets altogether where his light comes from. Here, actually, the shadow of the figure is cast from the side, right across the picture, while the sun is in front. And there is not the slightest attempt to indicate gradation of light in the sky, darkness in the forest, or any other positive element of chiaroscuro.

This is not because Holbein cannot give chiaroscuro if he chooses. He is twenty times a stronger master of it than Rembrandt; but he, therefore, knows exactly when and how to use it; and that wood engraving is not the proper means for it. The quantity of it which is needful for his story, and will not, by any sensational violence, either divert, or vulgarly enforce, the attention, he will give; and that with an unrivalled subtlety. Therefore I must ask you for a moment or two to quit the subject of technics, and look what these two woodcuts mean.

84. The one I have first shown you is of a plough-

man ploughing at evening. It is Holbein's object, here, to express the diffused and intense light of a golden summer sunset, so far as is consistent with grander purposes. A modern French or English chiaroscurist would have covered his sky with fleecy clouds, and relieved the ploughman's hat and his horses against it in strong black, and put sparkling touches on the furrows and grass. Holbein scornfully casts all such tricks aside; and draws the whole scene in pure white, with simple outlines.

85. And yet, when I put it beside this second vignette, (Fig. 3), which is of a preacher preaching in a feebly-lighted church, you will feel that the diffused warmth of the one subject, and diffused twilight in the other, are complete; and they will finally be to you more impressive than if they had been wrought out with every superficial means of effect, on each block.

For it is as a symbol, not as a scenic effect, that in each case the chiaroscuro is given. Holbein, I said, is at the head of the painter-reformers, and his Dance of Death is the most energetic and telling of all the forms given, in this epoch, to the *Rationalist* spirit of reform, preaching the new Gospel of Death,—"It is no matter whether you are priest or layman, what you believe, or what you do: here is the end." You shall see, in the course of our inquiry, that

THE LAST FURROW.

(Fig. 2) Fac-simile from Holbein's woodcut.

THE TWO PREACHERS.

(Fig 3) Fac-simile from Holbein's woodcut.

Botticelli, in like manner, represents the *Faithful* and *Catholic* temper of reform.

86. The teaching of Holbein is therefore always melancholy,—for the most part purely rational; and entirely furious in its indignation against all who, either by actual injustice in this life, or by what he holds to be false promise of another, destroy the good, or the energy, of the few days which man has to live. Against the rich, the luxurious, the Pharisee, the false lawyer, the priest, and the unjust judge, Holbein uses his fiercest mockery; but he is never himself unjust; never caricatures or equivocates; gives the facts as he knows them, with explanatory symbols, few and clear.

87. Among the powers which he hates, the pathetic and ingenious preaching of untruth is one of the chief; and it is curious to find his biographer, knowing this, and reasoning, as German critics nearly always do, from acquired knowledge, not perception, imagine instantly that he sees hypocrisy in the face of Holbein's preacher. "How skilfully," says Dr. Woltmann, "is the preacher propounding his doctrines; how thoroughly is his hypocrisy expressed in the features of his countenance, and in the gestures of his hands." But look at the cut yourself, candidly. I challenge you to find the slightest trace of hypocrisy in either feature or gesture. Holbein knew

better. It is not the hypocrite who has power in the pulpit. It is the *sincere* preacher of untruth who does mischief there. The hypocrite's place of power is in trade, or in general society; none but the sincere ever get fatal influence in the pulpit. This man is a refined gentleman—ascetic, earnest, thoughtful, and kind. He scarcely uses the vantage even of his pulpit,—comes aside out of it, as an eager man would, pleading; he is intent on being understood — *is* understood; his congregation are delighted—you might hear a pin drop among them: one is asleep indeed, who cannot see him, (being under the pulpit,) and asleep just because the teacher is as gentle as he is earnest, and speaks quietly.

88. How are we to know, then, that he speaks in vain? First, because among all his hearers you will not find one shrewd face. They are all either simple or stupid people: there is one nice woman in front of all, (else Holbein's representation had been caricature,) but she is not a shrewd one.

Secondly, by the light and shade. The church is not in extreme darkness—far from that; a grey twilight is over everything, but the sun is totally shut out of it;—not a ray comes in even at the window—*that* is darker than the walls, or vault.

Lastly, and chiefly, by the mocking expression of Death. Mocking, but not angry. The man has been preaching what he thought true. Death laughs at him, but is not indignant with him.

Death comes quietly: *I* am going to be preacher now; here is your own hour-glass, ready for me. You have spoken many words in your day. But "of the things which you have spoken, *this* is the sum,"—your death-warrant, signed and sealed. There's your text for to-day.

89. Of this other picture, the meaning is more plain, and far more beautiful. The husbandman is old and gaunt, and has past his days, not in speaking, but pressing the iron into the ground. And the payment for his life's work is, that he is clothed in rags, and his feet are bare on the clods; and he has no hat—but the brim of a hat only, and his long, unkempt grey hair comes through. But all the air is full of warmth and of peace; and, beyond his village church, there is, at last, light indeed. His horses lag in the furrow, and his own limbs totter and fail: but one comes to help him. 'It is a long field,' says Death; 'but we'll get to the end of it to-day,—you and I.'

90. And now that we know the meaning, we are able to discuss the technical qualities farther.

Both of these engravings, you will find, are executed with blunt lines; but more than that, they are executed with *quiet* lines, entirely steady.

Now, here I have in my hand a lively woodcut of the present day—a good average type of the modern style of wood-cutting, which you will all recognize.*

The shade in this is drawn on the wood (not *cut*, but drawn, observe,) at the rate of at least ten lines in a second: Holbein's, at the rate of about one line in three seconds.†

91. Now there are two different matters to be considered with respect to these two opposed methods of execution. The first, that the rapid work, though easy to the artist, is very difficult to the woodcutter; so that it implies instantly a separation between the two crafts, and that your wood engraver has ceased to be a draughtsman. I shall return to this point. I wish to insist on the other first; namely, the effect of the more deliberative method on the drawing itself.

92. When the hand moves at the rate of ten lines in a second, it is indeed under the government of the muscles of the wrist and shoulder; but it cannot

* The ordinary title-page of Punch.

† In the lecture-room, the relative rates of execution were shown; I arrive at this estimate by timing the completion of two small pieces of shade in the two methods.

possibly be under the complete government of the brains. I am able to do this zigzag line evenly, because I have got the use of the hand from practice; and the faster it is done, the evener it will be. But I have no mental authority over every line I thus lay: chance regulates them. Whereas, when I draw at the rate of two or three seconds to each line, my hand disobeys the muscles a little —the mechanical accuracy is not so great; nay, there ceases to be any *appearance* of dexterity at all. But there is, in reality, more manual skill required in the slow work than in the swift,—and all the while the hand is thoroughly under the orders of the brains. Holbein deliberately resolves, for every line, as it goes along, that it shall be *so* thick, *so* far from the next,—that it shall begin here, and stop there. And he is deliberately assigning the utmost quantity of meaning to it, that a line will carry.

93. It is not fair, however, to compare common work of one age with the best of another. Here is a woodcut of Tenniel's, which I think contains as high qualities as it is possible to find in modern art.* I hold it as beyond others fine, because there is not the slightest caricature in it. No face, no

* John Bull as Sir Oliver Surface, with Sir Peter Teazle and Joseph Surface. It appeared in Punch, early in 1863.

attitude, is pushed beyond the degree of natural humour they would have possessed in life; and in precision of momentary expression, the drawing is equal to the art of any time, and shows power which would, if regulated, be quite adequate to producing an immortal work.

94. Why, then, is it *not* immortal? You yourselves, in compliance with whose demand it was done, forgot it the next week. It will become historically interesting; but no man of true knowledge and feeling will ever keep this in his cabinet of treasure, as he does these woodcuts of Holbein's.

The reason is that this is base coin,—alloyed gold. There *is* gold in it, but also a quantity of brass and lead—wilfully added—to make it fit for the public. Holbein's is beaten gold, seven times tried in the fire. Of which commonplace but useful metaphor the meaning here is, first, that to catch the vulgar eye a quantity of,—so-called,—light and shade is added by Tenniel. It is effective to an ignorant eye, and is ingeniously disposed; but it is entirely conventional and false, unendurable by any person who knows what chiaroscuro is.

Secondly, for one line that Holbein lays, Tenniel has a dozen. There are, for instance, a hundred and fifty-seven lines in Sir Peter Teazle's wig, without counting dots and slight cross-hatching;—

but the entire face and flowing hair of Holbein's preacher are done with forty-five lines, all told.

95. Now observe what a different state of mind the two artists must be in on such conditions;—one, never in a hurry, never doing anything that he knows is wrong; never doing a line badly that he can do better; and appealing only to the feelings of sensitive persons, and the judgment of attentive ones. That is Holbein's habit of soul. What is the habit of soul of every modern engraver? Always in a hurry; everywhere doing things which he knows to be wrong—(Tenniel knows his light and shade to be wrong as well as I do)—continually doing things badly which he was able to do better; and appealing exclusively to the feelings of the dull, and the judgment of the inattentive.

Do you suppose that is not enough to make the difference between mortal and immortal art,—the original genius being supposed alike in both?*

96. Thus far of the state of the artist himself. I pass next to the relation between him and his subordinate, the woodcutter.

The modern artist requires him to cut a hundred

* In preparing these passages for the press, I feel perpetual need of qualifications and limitations, for it is impossible to surpass the humour, or precision of expressional touch, in the really golden parts of Tenniel's works; and they *may* be immortal, as representing what is best in their day.

and fifty-seven lines in the wig only,—the old artist requires him to cut forty-five for the face, and long hair, altogether. The actual proportion is roughly, and on the average, about one to twenty of cost in manual labour, ancient to modern,—the twentieth part of the mechanical labour, to produce an immortal instead of a perishable work,—the twentieth part of the labour; and—which is the greatest difference of all—that twentieth part, at once less mechanically difficult, and more mentally pleasant. Mr. Otley, in his general History of Engraving, says, "The greatest difficulty in wood engraving occurs in clearing out the minute quadrangular lights;" and in any modern woodcut you will see that where the lines of the drawing cross each other to produce shade, the white interstices are cut out so neatly that there is no appearance of any jag or break in the lines; they look exactly as if they had been drawn with a pen. It is chiefly difficult to cut the pieces clearly out when the lines cross at right angles; easier when they form oblique or diamond-shaped interstices; but in any case, some half-dozen cuts, and in square crossings as many as twenty, are required to clear one interstice. Therefore if I carelessly draw six strokes with my pen across other six, I produce twenty-five interstices, each of which will need at least six—perhaps twenty, careful touches of

the burin to clear out.—Say ten for an average; and I demand two hundred and fifty exquisitely precise touches from my engraver, to render ten careless ones of mine.

97. Now I take up Punch, at his best. The whole of the left side of John Bull's waistcoat—the shadow on his knee-breeches and great-coat—the whole of the Lord Chancellor's gown, and of John Bull's and Sir Peter Teazle's complexions, are worked with finished precision of cross-hatching. These have indeed some purpose in their texture; but in the most wanton and gratuitous way, the wall below the window is cross-hatched too, and that not with a double, but a treble line, Fig. 4.

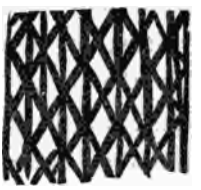


FIG. 4.

There are about thirty of these columns, with thirty-five interstices each: approximately, 1,050—certainly not fewer—interstices to be deliberately cut clear, to get that two inches square of shadow.

Now calculate—or think enough to feel the impossibility of calculating—the number of woodcuts used daily for our popular prints, and how many men are night and day cutting 1,050 square holes to the square inch, as the occupation of their manly life. And Mrs. Beecher Stowe and the North Americans fancy they have abolished slavery!

98. The workman cannot have even the consolation of pride; for his task, even in its finest accomplishment, is not really difficult,—only tedious. When you have once got into the practice, it is as easy as lying. To cut regular holes *without* a purpose is easy enough; but to cut *irregular* holes with a purpose, that is difficult, for ever;—no tricks of tool or trade will give you power to do that.

The supposed difficulty—the thing which, at all events, it takes time to learn, is to cut the interstices neat, and each like the other. But is there any reason, do you suppose, for their being neat, and each like the other? So far from it, they would be twenty times prettier if they were irregular, and each different from the other. And an old woodcutter, instead of taking pride in cutting these interstices smooth and alike, resolutely cuts them rough and irregular; taking care, at the same time, never to have any more than are wanted, this being only one part of the general system of intelligent manipulation, which made so good an artist of the engraver that it is impossible to say of any standard old woodcut whether the draughtsman engraved it himself or not. I should imagine, from the character and subtlety of the touch, that every line of the Dance of Death had been engraved by Holbein; we know it was not, and that there can be no certainty given by even the

finest pieces of wood execution of anything more than perfect harmony between the designer and workman. And consider how much this harmony demands in the latter. Not that the modern engraver is unintelligent in applying his mechanical skill: very often he greatly improves the drawing; but we never could mistake his hand for Holbein's.

99. The true merit, then, of wood execution, as regards this matter of cross-hatching, is first that there be no more crossing than necessary; secondly, that all the interstices be various, and rough. You may look through the entire series of the Dance of Death without finding any cross-hatching whatever, except in a few unimportant bits of background, so rude as to need scarcely more than one touch to each interstice. Albert Durer crosses more definitely; but yet, in any fold of his drapery, every white spot differs in size from every other, and the arrangement of the whole is delightful, by the kind of variety which the spots on a leopard have.

On the other hand, where either expression or form can be rendered by the shape of the lights and darks, the old engraver becomes as careful as in an ordinary ground he is careless.

The endeavour, with your own hand, and common pen and ink, to copy a small piece of either of the

two Holbein woodcuts (Figures 2 and 3) will prove this to you better than any words.

100. I said that, had Tenniel been rightly trained, there might have been the making of a Holbein, or nearly a Holbein, in him. I do not know; but I can turn from his work to that of a man who was not trained at all, and who was, without training, Holbein's equal.

Equal, in the sense that this brown stone, in my left hand, is the equal, though not the likeness, of that in my right. They are both of the same true and pure crystal; but the one is brown with iron, and never touched by forming hand; the other has never been in rough companionship, and has been exquisitely polished. So with these two men. The one was the companion of Erasmus and Sir Thomas More. His father was so good an artist that you cannot always tell their drawings asunder. But the other was a farmer's son; and learned his trade in the back shops of Newcastle.

Yet the first book I asked you to get was his biography; and in this frame are set together a drawing by Hans Holbein, and one by Thomas Bewick. I know which is most scholarly; but I do *not* know which is best.

101. It is much to say for the self-taught Englishman;—yet do not congratulate yourselves on his

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Things Celestial and Terrestrial,

as apparent to the English Mind

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simplicity. I told you, a little while since, that the English nobles had left the history of birds to be written, and their spots to be drawn, by a printer's lad;—but I did not tell you their farther loss in the fact that this printer's lad could have written their own histories, and drawn their own spots, if they had let him. But they had no history to be written; and were too closely maculate to be portrayed; — white ground in most places altogether obscured. Had there been Mores and Henrys to draw, Bewick could have drawn them; and would have found his function. As it was, the nobles of his day left him to draw the frogs, and pigs, and sparrows—of his day, which seemed to him, in his solitude, the best types of its Nobility. No sight or thought of beautiful things was ever granted him;—no heroic creature, goddess-born — how much less any native Deity — ever shone upon him. To his utterly English mind, the straw of the stye, and its tenantry, were abiding truth;—the cloud of Olympus, and its tenantry, a child's dream. He could draw a pig, but not an Aphrodite.

102. The three pieces of woodcut from his Fables (the two lower ones enlarged) in the opposite plate, show his utmost strength and utmost rudeness. I must endeavour to make you thoroughly under-

stand both:—the magnificent artistic power, the flawless virtue, veracity, tenderness,—the infinite humour of the man; and yet the difference between England and Florence, in the use they make of such gifts in their children.

For the moment, however, I confine myself to the examination of technical points; and we must follow our former conclusions a little further.

103. Because our lines in wood must be thick, it becomes an extreme virtue in wood engraving to economize lines,—not merely, as in all other art, to save time and power, but because, our lines being necessarily blunt, we must make up our minds to do with fewer, by many, than are in the object. But is this necessarily a disadvantage?

Absolutely, an immense disadvantage,—a woodcut never can be so beautiful or good a thing as a painting, or line engraving. But in its own separate and useful way, an excellent thing, because, practised rightly, it exercises in the artist, and summons in you, the habit of abstraction; that is to say, of deciding what are the essential points in the things you see, and seizing these; a habit entirely necessary to strong humanity; and so natural to all humanity, that it leads, in its indolent and undisciplined states, to all the vulgar amateur's liking of sketches better than pictures. The sketch seems to put the

thing for him into a concentrated and exciting form.

104. Observe, therefore, to guard you from this error, that a bad sketch is good for nothing; and that nobody can make a good sketch unless they generally are trying to finish with extreme care. But the abstraction of the essential particulars in his subject by a line-master, has a peculiar didactic value. For painting, when it is complete, leaves it much to your own judgment what to look at; and, if you are a fool, you look at the wrong thing;—but in a fine woodcut, the master says to you, "You *shall* look at this, or at nothing."

105. For example, here is a little tailpiece of Bewick's, to the fable of the Frogs and the Stork.* He is, as I told you, as stout a reformer as Holbein, or Botticelli, or Luther, or Savonarola; and, as an impartial reformer, hits right and left, at lower or upper classes, if he sees them wrong. Most frequently, he strikes at vice without reference to class; but in this vignette he strikes definitely at the degradation of the viler popular mind which is incapable of being governed, because it cannot understand the nobleness of kingship. He has written—better than written, engraved, sure

* From Bewick's Æsop's Fables.

to suffer no slip of type—his legend under the drawing; so that we know his meaning:

"Set them up with a king, indeed!"

106. There is an audience of seven frogs, listening to a speaker, or croaker, in the middle; and Bewick has set himself to show in all, but especially in the speaker, essential frogginess of mind—the marsh temper. He could not have done it half so well in painting as he has done by the abstraction of wood-outline. The characteristic of a manly mind, or body, is to be gentle in temper, and firm in constitution; the contrary essence of a froggy mind and body is to be angular in temper, and flabby in constitution. I have enlarged Bewick's orator-frog for you, Plate I, c., and I think you will feel that he is entirely expressed in those essential particulars.

This being perfectly good woodcutting, notice especially its deliberation. No scrawling or scratching, or cross-hatching, or '*free*' work of any sort. Most deliberate laying down of solid lines and dots, of which you cannot change one. The real difficulty of wood engraving is to cut every one of these black lines or spaces of the exactly right shape, and not at all to cross-hatch them cleanly.

107. Next, examine the technical treatment of the pig, above. I have purposely chosen this as an

example of a white object on dark ground, and the frog as a dark object on light ground, to explain to you what I mean by saying that fine engraving regards local colour, but not light and shade. You see both frog and pig are absolutely without light and shade. The frog, indeed, casts a shadow; but his hind leg is as white as his throat. In the pig you don't even know which way the light falls. But you know at once that the pig is white, and the frog brown or green.

108. There are, however, two pieces of chiaroscuro *implied* in the treatment of the pig. It is assumed that his curly tail would be light against the background—dark against his own rump. This little piece of heraldic quartering is absolutely necessary to solidify him. He would have been a white ghost of a pig, flat on the background, but for that alternative tail, and the bits of dark behind the ears. Secondly: Where the shade is necessary to suggest the position of his ribs, it is given with graphic and chosen points of dark, as few as possible; not for the sake of the shade at all, but of the skin and bone.

109. That, then, being the law of refused chiaroscuro, observe further the method of outline. We said that we were to have thick lines in wood, if possible. Look what thickness of black outline

Bewick has left under our pig's chin, and al his nose.

But that is not a line at all, you think?

No;—a modern engraver would have mad one, and prided himself on getting it fine. Be leaves it actually thicker than the snout, but all his ingenuity of touch to vary the forms, break the extremities of his white cuts, so the eye may be refreshed and relieved by forms at every turn. The group of white touc filling the space between snout and ears mi be a wreath of fine-weather clouds, so studio are they grouped and broken.

And nowhere, you see, does a single black cross another.

Look back to Figure 4, page 83, and you know, henceforward, the difference between g and bad woodcutting.

110. We have also, in the lower woodcu notable instance of Bewick's power of abstract You will observe that one of the chief character this frog, which makes him humorous,—next to vain endeavour to get some firmness into his feet,—is his obstinately angular hump-back. you must feel, when you see it so marked, how portant a general character of a frog it is to a hump-back,—not at the shoulders, but the loi

111. Here, then, is a case in which you will see the exact function that anatomy should take in art.

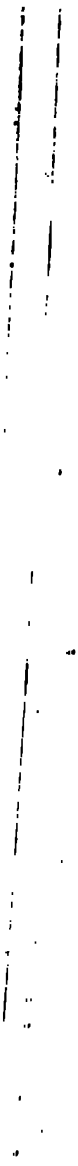
All the most scientific anatomy in the world would never have taught Bewick, much less you, how to draw a frog.

But when once you *have* drawn him, or looked at him, so as to know his points, it then becomes entirely interesting to find out *why* he has a hump-back. So I went myself yesterday to Professor Rolleston for a little anatomy, just as I should have gone to Professor Phillips for a little geology; and the Professor brought me a fine little active frog; and we put him on the table, and made him jump all over it, and then the Professor brought in a charming Squelette of a frog, and showed me that he needed a projecting bone from his rump, as a bird needs it from its breast,—the one to attach the strong muscles of the hind legs, as the other to attach those of the fore-legs or wings. So that the entire leaping power of the frog is in his hump-back, as the flying power of the bird is in its breast-bone. And thus this Frog Parliament is most literally a Rump Parliament—everything depending on the hind legs, and nothing on the brains; which makes it wonderfully like some other Parliaments we know of nowadays, with

Mr. Ayrton and Mr. Lowe for their æsthetic and acquisitive eyes, and a rump of Railway Directors.

112. Now, to conclude, for want of time only—I have but touched on the beginning of my subject,—understand clearly and finally this simple principle of all art, that the best is that which realizes absolutely, if possible. Here is a viper by Carpaccio: you are afraid to go near it. Here is an arm-chair by Carpaccio: you who came in late, and are standing, to my regret, would like to sit down in it. This is consummate art; but you can only have that with consummate means, and exquisitely trained and hereditary mental power.

With inferior means, and average mental power, you must be content to give a rude abstraction; but if rude abstraction *is* to be made, think what a difference there must be between a wise man's and a fool's; and consider what heavy responsibility lies upon you in your youth, to determine, among realities, by what you will be delighted, and, among imaginations, by whose you will be led.



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LECTURE IV.

THE TECHNICS OF METAL ENGRAVING.

113. WE are to-day to examine the proper methods for the technical management of the most perfect of the arms of precision possessed by the artist. For you will at once understand that a line cut by a finely-pointed instrument upon the smooth surface of metal is susceptible of the utmost fineness that can be given to the *definite* work of the human hand. In drawing with pen upon paper, the surface of the paper is slightly rough; necessarily, two points touch it instead of one, and the liquid flows from them more or less irregularly, whatever the draughtsman's skill. But you cut a metallic surface with one edge only; the furrow drawn by a skater on the surface of ice is like it on a large scale. Your surface is polished, and your line may be wholly faultless, if your hand is.

114. And because, in such material, effects may be produced which no penmanship could rival, most people, I fancy, think that a steel plate half en-

proves itself that the workman has no trouble whatever, compared to that of a pen draughtsman.

To test our feeling in this matter accurately, here is a manuscript book written with pen and ink, and illustrated with flourishes and vignettes.

You will all, I think, be disposed, on examining it, to exclaim, How wonderful! and even to doubt the possibility of every page in the book being executed in the same manner. Again, here are three of my own drawings, executed with the pen, and Indian ink, when I was fifteen. They are copies from large lithographs by Prout; and I imagine that most of my pupils would think me very tyrannical if I requested them to do anything of the kind themselves. And yet, when you see in the shop windows a line engraving like this,* or this,* either of which contains, alone, as much work as fifty pages of the manuscript book, or fifty such drawings as mine, you look upon its effect as quite a matter of course,—you never say 'how wonderful' *that* is, nor consider how you would like to have to live, by producing anything of the same kind yourselves.

115. Yet you cannot suppose it is in reality easier

* Miller's large plate of the Grand Canal, Venice, after Turner; and Goodall's, of Tivoli, after Turner. The other examples referred to are left in the University Galleries.

to draw a line with a cutting point, not seeing the effect at all, or, if any effect, seeing a gleam of light instead of darkness, than to draw your black line at once on the white paper? You cannot really think* that there is something complacent, sympathetic, and helpful in the nature of steel; so that while a pen-and-ink sketch may always be considered an achievement proving cleverness in the sketcher, a sketch on steel comes out by mere favour of the indulgent metal; or that the plate is woven like a piece of pattern silk, and the pattern is developed by pasteboard cards punched full of holes? Not so. Look close at this engraving, or take a smaller and simpler one, Turner's Mercury and Argus,—imagine it to be a drawing in pen and ink, and yourself required similarly to produce its parallel! True, the steel point has the one advantage of not blotting, but it has tenfold or twentyfold disadvantage, in that you cannot slur, nor efface, except in a very resolute and laborious way, nor play with it, nor even see what you are doing with it at the moment, far less the effect that is to be. You must *feel* what you are doing with it, and know precisely what you

* This paragraph was not read at the lecture, time not allowing:—it is part of what I wrote on engraving some years ago, in the papers for the Art Journal, called the Cestus of Aglaia.

have got to do; how deep, how broad, how far apart your lines must be, etc. and etc., (a couple of lines of etceteras would not be enough to imply all you must know). But suppose the plate *were* only a pen drawing: take your pen—your finest—and just try to copy the leaves that entangle the head of Io, and her head itself; remembering always that the kind of work required here is mere child's play compared to that of fine figure engraving. Nevertheless, take a small magnifying glass to this—count the dots and lines that gradate the nostrils and the edges of the facial bone; notice how the light is left on the top of the head by the stopping, at its outline, of the coarse touches which form the shadows under the leaves; examine it well, and then—I humbly ask of you—try to do a piece of it yourself! You clever sketcher—you young lady or gentleman of genius—you eye-glassed dilettante—you current writer of criticism royally plural,—I beseech you,—do it yourself; do the merely etched outline yourself, if no more. Look you,—you hold your etching needle this way, as you would a pencil, nearly; and then,—you scratch with it! it is as easy as lying. Or if you think that too difficult, take an easier piece;—take either of the light sprays of foliage that rise against the fortress on the right, pass your lens over them—

look how their fine outline is first drawn, leaf by leaf; then how the distant rock is put in between, with broken lines, mostly stopping before they touch the leaf-outline; and again, I pray you, do it yourself,—if not on that scale, on a larger. Go on into the hollows of the distant rock,—traverse its thickets, —number its towers;—count how many lines there are in a laurel bush—in an arch—in a casement; some hundred and fifty, or two hundred, deliberately drawn lines, you will find, in every square quarter of an inch;—say *three thousand to the inch*,—each, with skilful intent, put in its place! and then consider what the ordinary sketcher's work must appear, to the men who have been trained to this!

116. "But might not more have been done by three thousand lines to a square inch?" you will perhaps ask. Well, possibly. It may be with lines as with soldiers: three hundred, knowing their work thoroughly, may be stronger than three thousand less sure of their aim. We shall have to press close home this question about numbers and purpose presently;—it is not the question now. Suppose certain results required,—atmospheric effects, surface textures, transparencies of shade, confusions of light,—then, more could *not* be done with less. There are engravings of this modern school, of

[illegible] their particular aim, it may be said, most [illegible] they cannot be better done.

[illegible] finished, [illegible] at least, finished [illegible] ordinary mortals, though its fastidious master [illegible] —a quite pure [illegible] by Mr. Charles Henry Jeens, in [illegible] I mean that there are no [illegible] or any mechanical tooling, [illegible] steady hand-work, from a picture by Mr. Armytage, which, without possessing any of the highest claims to admiration, is yet free from the [illegible] which disgrace most of our popular religious art, and is so sweet in the fancy of it as to deserve, better than many works of higher power, the pains of the engraver to make it a common possession. It is meant to help us to imagine the evening of the day when the father and mother of Christ had been seeking him through Jerusalem: they have come to a well where women are drawing water; St. Joseph passes on —but the tired Madonna, leaning on the well's margin, asks wistfully of the women if they have seen such and such a child astray. Now will you just look for a while into the lines by which the expression of the weary and anxious face is rendered; see how unerring they are,—how calm and clear; and think how many questions have

to be determined in drawing the most minute portion of any one,—its curve,—its thickness,—its distance from the next,—its own preparation for ending, invisibly, where it ends. Think what the precision must be in these that trace the edge of the lip, and make it look quivering with disappointment, or in these which have made the eyelash heavy with restrained tears.

117. Or if, as must be the case with many of my audience, it is impossible for you to conceive the difficulties here overcome, look merely at the draperies, and other varied substances represented in the plate; see how silk, and linen, and stone, and pottery, and flesh, are all separated in texture, and gradated in light, by the most subtle artifices and appliances of line,—of which artifices, and the nature of the mechanical labour throughout, I must endeavour to give you to-day a more distinct conception than you are in the habit of forming. But as I shall have to blame some of these methods in their general result, and I do not wish any word of general blame to be associated with this most excellent and careful plate by Mr. Jeens, I will pass, for special examination, to one already in your reference series, which for the rest exhibits more various treatment in its combined landscape, background, and figures; the Belle Jardinière of

Raphael, drawn and engraved by the Baron D[illegible] movers.

You see, in the first place, that the gro[illegible] stones, and other coarse surfaces are distinguish[illegible] from the flesh and draperies by broken and wrigg[illegible] lines. These broken lines cannot be executed w[illegible] the burin; they are etched in the early sta[illegible] of the plate, and are a modern artifice, never us[illegible] by old engravers; partly because the older m[illegible] were not masters of the art of etching, [illegible] chiefly because even those who were acquaint[illegible] with it would not employ lines of this nature. Th[illegible] have been developed by the importance of lan[illegible] scape in modern engraving, and have produc[illegible] some valuable results in small plates, especially [illegible] architecture. But they are entirely erroneous [illegible] principle, for the surface of stones and leaves [illegible] not broken or jagged in this manner, but consi[illegible] of mossy, or blooming, or otherwise organic textu[illegible] which cannot be represented by these coarse line[illegible] their general consequence has therefore been [illegible] withdraw the mind of the observer from all beauti[illegible] and tender characters in foreground, and eventua[illegible] to destroy the very school of landscape engravi[illegible] which gave birth to them.

Considered, however, as a means of relieving m[illegible] delicate textures, they are in some degree leg[illegible]

mate, being, in fact, a kind of chasing or jagging one part of the plate surface in order to throw out the delicate tints from the rough field. But the same effect was produced with less pains, and far more entertainment to the eye, by the older engravers, who employed purely ornamental variations of line; thus in Plate IV., opposite page 123, the drapery is sufficiently distinguished from the grass by the treatment of the latter as an ornamental arabesque. The grain of wood is elaborately engraved by Marc Antonio, with the same purpose, in the plate given in your Standard Series.

118. Next, however, you observe what difference of texture and force exists between the smooth, continuous lines themselves, which are all really *engraved.* You must take some pains to understand the nature of this operation.

The line is first cut lightly through its whole course, by absolute decision and steadiness of hand, which you may endeavour to imitate if you like, in its simplest phase, by drawing a circle with your compass-pen; and then, grasping your penholder so that you can push the point like a plough, describing other circles inside or outside of it, in exact parallelism with the mathematical line, and at exactly equal distances. To approach, or depart, with your point at finely gradated intervals, may

be your next exercise, if you find the first unexpectedly easy.

119. When the line is thus described in its proper course, it is ploughed deeper, where depth is needed, by a second cut of the burin, first on one side, then on the other, the cut being given with gradated force so as to take away most steel where the line is to be darkest. Every line of gradated depth in the plate has to be thus cut eight or ten times over at least, with retouchings to smooth and clear all in the close. Jason has to plough his field ten-furrow deep, with his fiery oxen well in hand, all the while.

When the essential lines are thus produced, in their several directions, those which have been drawn across each other, so as to give depth of shade, or richness of texture, have to be farther enriched by dots in the interstices; else there would be a painful appearance of network everywhere; and these dots require each four or five jags to produce them; and each of these jags must be done with what artists and engravers alike call 'feeling,'—the sensibility, that is, of a hand completely under mental government. So wrought, the dots look soft, and like touches of paint; but mechanically dug in, they are vulgar and hard.

120. Now, observe, that, for every piece of shadow throughout the work, the engraver has to decide with what quantity and kind of line he will produce it. Exactly the same quantity of black, and therefore the same depth of tint in general effect, may be given with six thick lines; or with twelve, of half their thickness; or with eighteen, of a third of the thickness. The second six, second twelve, or second eighteen, may cross the first six, first twelve, or first eighteen, or go between them; and they may cross at any angle. And then the third six may be put between the first six, or between the second six, or across both, and at any angle. In the network thus produced, any kind of dots may be put in the severally shaped interstices. And for any of the series of superadded lines, dots, of equivalent value in shade, may be substituted. (Some engravings are wrought in dots altogether.) Choice infinite, with multiplication of infinity, is, at all events, to be made, for every minute space, from one side of the plate to the other.

121. The excellence of a beautiful engraving is primarily in the use of these resources to exhibit the qualities of the original picture, with delight to the eye in the method of translation; and the language of engraving, when once you begin to understand it, is, in these respects, so fertile, so

[illegible] unspeakably subtle and severe [illegible] of that you may quite easily make [illegible] your life's investigation, as you [illegible] of a lovely literature.

But in doing this, you would withdraw, [illegible] withdraw, your attention from the h[illegible] of art, precisely as a grammarian, wh[illegible] that, and nothing more, loses command of the m[illegible] and substance of thought. And the exquisitely [illegible] terrible mechanisms of the engraver's method h[illegible] in fact, thus entangled the intelligence of the ca[illegible] draughtsmen of Europe; so that since the final [illegible] fection of this translator's power, all the men of f[illegible] patience and finest hand have stayed content [illegible] it; the subtlest draughtsmanship has perished [illegible] the canvas,* and sought more popular praise in [illegible] labyrinth of disciplined language, and more or [illegible] dulled or degraded thought. And, in sum, I k[illegible] no cause more direct or fatal, in the destructio[illegible] the great schools of European art, than the [illegible] fectness of modern line engraving.

122. This great and profoundly to be regr[illegible] influence I will prove and illustrate to you [illegible] another occasion. My object to-day is to ex[illegible]

* An effort has lately been made in France, by Meissonier, Gé[illegible] and their school, to recover it, with marvellous collateral sk[illegible] engravers. The etching of Gerome's Louis XIV. and Molière [illegible] of the completest pieces of skilful mechanism ever put on meta[illegible]

the perfectness of the art itself; and above all to request you, if you will not look at pictures instead of photographs, at least not to allow the cheap merits of the chemical operation to withdraw your interest from the splendid human labour of the engraver. Here is a little vignette from Stothard, for instance, in Rogers' poems, to the lines,

> "Soared in the swing, half pleased and half afraid,
> 'Neath sister elms, that waved their summer shade."

You would think, would you not? (and rightly,) that of all difficult things to express with crossed black lines and dots, the face of a young girl must be the most difficult. Yet here you have the face of a bright girl, radiant in light, transparent, mysterious, almost breathing,—her dark hair involved in delicate wreath and shade, her eyes full of joy and sweet playfulness,—and all this done by the exquisite order and gradation of a very few lines, which, if you will examine them through a lens, you find dividing and chequering the lip, and cheek, and chin, so strongly that you would have fancied they could only produce the effect of a grim iron mask. But the intelligences of order and form guide them into beauty, and inflame them with delicatest life.

123. And do you see the size of this head? About as large as the bud of a forget-me-not!

Can you imagine the fineness of the little pressures of the hand on the steel, in that space, which at the edge of the almost invisible lip, fashioned its less or more of smile?

My chemical friends, if you wish ever to know anything rightly concerning the arts, I very urgently advise you to throw all your vials and washes down the gutter-trap; and if you will ascribe, as you think it so clever to do, in your modern creeds, all virtue to the sun, use that virtue through your own heads and fingers, and apply your solar energies to draw a skilful line or two, for once or twice in your life. You may learn more by trying to engrave, like Goodall, the tip of an ear, or the curl of a lock of hair, than by photographing the entire population of the United States of America,—black, white, and neutral-tint.

And one word, by the way, touching the complaints I hear at my having set you to so fine work that it hurts your eyes. You have noticed that all great sculptors—and most of the great painters of Florence—began by being goldsmiths. Why do you think the goldsmith's apprenticeship is so fruitful? Primarily, because it forces the boy to do small work, and mind what he is about. Do you suppose Michael Angelo learned his business by dashing or hitting at it? He laid the founda-

tion of all his after power by doing precisely what I am requiring my own pupils to do,—copying German engravings in facsimile! And for your eyes—you all sit up at night till you haven't got any eyes worth speaking of. Go to bed at half-past nine, and get up at four, and you'll see something out of them, in time.

124. Nevertheless, whatever admiration you may be brought to feel, and with justice, for this lovely workmanship,—the more distinctly you comprehend its merits, the more distinctly also will the question rise in your mind, How is it that a performance so marvellous has yet taken no rank in the records of art of any permanent or acknowledged kind? How is it that these vignettes from Stothard and Turner,* like the woodcuts from Tenniel, scarcely make the name of the engraver known; and that they never are found side by side with this older and apparently

* I must again qualify the too sweeping statement of the text. I think, as time passes, some of these nineteenth century line engravings will become monumental. The first vignette of the garden, with the cut hedges and fountain, for instance, in Rogers' poems, is so consummate in its use of every possible artifice of delicate line, (note the look of *tremulous* atmosphere got by the undulatory etched lines on the pavement, and the broken masses, worked with dots, of the fountain foam,) that I think it cannot but, with some of its companions, survive the refuse of its school, and become classic. I find in like manner, even with all their faults and weaknesses, the vignettes to Heyne's Virgil to be real art-possessions.

ruder art, in the cabinets of men of real [illegible]
The reason is precisely the same as in the c
the Lemmel woodcut. This modern line eng
is alloyed gold. Rich in capacity, astonish
attainment, it nevertheless admits wilful fau
misses what it ought first to have attained.
therefore, to a certain measure, vile in its perfe
while the older work is noble even in its failur
classic no less in what it deliberately refuses, th
what it rationally and rightly prefers and perfor

125. Here, for instance, I have enlarged the
of one of Durer's Madonnas for you out of o
his most careful plates.* You think it very
Well, so it is. Don't be afraid to think so, nor t
so. Frightfully ugly; vulgar also. It is the
simply, of a fat Dutch girl, with all the pleasan
left out. There is not the least doubt about
Don't let anybody force Albert Durer down
throats; nor make you expect pretty things from
Stothard's young girl in the swing, or Sir Josl
Age of Innocence, are in quite angelic sphere
another world, compared to this black domai
poor, laborious Albert. We are not talking of fe
beauty, so please you, just now, gentlemen, bu
engraving. And the merit, the classical, indefeas

* Plate 11th, in the Appendix, taken from the engraving c
Virgin sitting in the fenced garden, with two angels crowning

immortal merit of this head of a Dutch girl with all the beauty left out, is in the fact that every line of it, as engraving, is as good as can be;—good, not with the mechanical dexterity of a watchmaker, but with the intellectual effort and sensitiveness of an artist who knows precisely what can be done, and ought to be attempted, with his assigned materials. He works easily, fearlessly, flexibly; the dots are not all measured in distance; the lines not all mathematically parallel or divergent. He has even missed his mark at the mouth in one place, and leaves the mistake, frankly. But there are no petrified mistakes; nor is the eye so accustomed to the look of the mechanical furrow as to accept it for final excellence. The engraving is full of the painter's higher power and wider perception; it is classically perfect, because duly subordinate, and presenting for your applause only the virtues proper to its own sphere. Among these, I must now reiterate, the first of all is the *decorative* arrangement of *lines*.

126. You all know what a pretty thing a damask tablecloth is, and how a pattern is brought out by threads running one way in one space, and across in another. So, in lace, a certain delightfulness is given by the texture of meshed lines.

Similarly, on any surface of metal, the object of the engraver is, or ought to be, to cover it with lovely

[illegible] forming a lacework, and including a variety of [illegible] to the eye.

[illegible] his business, primarily, before any other matter can be thought of, his work must be ornamental. You know I told you a sculptor's business is first to cover a surface with pleasant [illegible] whether they mean anything or not; so an engraver's is to cover it with pleasant *lines*, whether they mean anything or not. That they should mean something and a good deal of something, is indeed desirable afterwards; but first we must be ornamental.

127. Now if you will compare Plate II. at the beginning of this lecture, which is a characteristic example of good Florentine engraving, and represents the Planet and power of Aphrodite, with the Aphrodite of Bewick in the upper division of Plate I., you will at once understand the difference between a primarily ornamental, and a primarily realistic, style. The first requirement in the Florentine work, is that it shall be a lovely arrangement of lines; a pretty thing upon a page. Bewick *has* a secondary notion of making his vignette a pretty thing upon a page. But he is overpowered by his vigorous veracity, and bent first on giving you his idea of Venus. Quite right, he would have been, mind you, if he had been carving a statue of her

on Mount Eryx; but not when he was engraving a vignette to Æsop's fables. To engrave well is to ornament a surface well, not to create a realistic impression. I beg your pardon for my repetitions; but the point at issue is the root of the whole business, and I *must* get it well asserted, and variously.

Let me pass to a more important example.

128. Three years ago, in the rough first arrangement of the copies in the Educational Series, I put an outline of the top of Apollo's sceptre, which, in the catalogue, was said to be probably by Baccio Bandini of Florence, for your first real exercise; it remains so, the olive being put first only for its mythological rank.

The series of engravings to which the plate from which that exercise is copied belongs, are part of a number, executed chiefly, I think, from early designs of Sandro Botticelli, and some in great part by his hand. He and his assistant, Baccio, worked together; and in such harmony, that Bandini probably often does what Sandro wants, better than Sandro could have done it himself; and, on the other hand, there is no design of Bandini's over which Sandro does not seem to have had influence.

And wishing now to show you three examples of the finest work of the old, the renaissance, and

the modern schools,—of the old, I will take Baccio Bandini's Astrologia, Plate III., opposite. Of the renaissance, Durer's Adam and Eve. And of the modern, this head of the daughter of Herodias, engraved from Luini by Beaugrand, which is as affectionately and sincerely wrought, though in the modern manner, as any plate of the old schools.

129. Now observe the progress of the feeling for light and shade in the three examples.

The first is nearly all white paper; you think of the outline as the constructive element throughout.

The second is a vigorous piece of *white* and *black*—not of *light* and *shade*,—for all the high lights are equally white, whether of flesh, or leaves, or goat's hair.

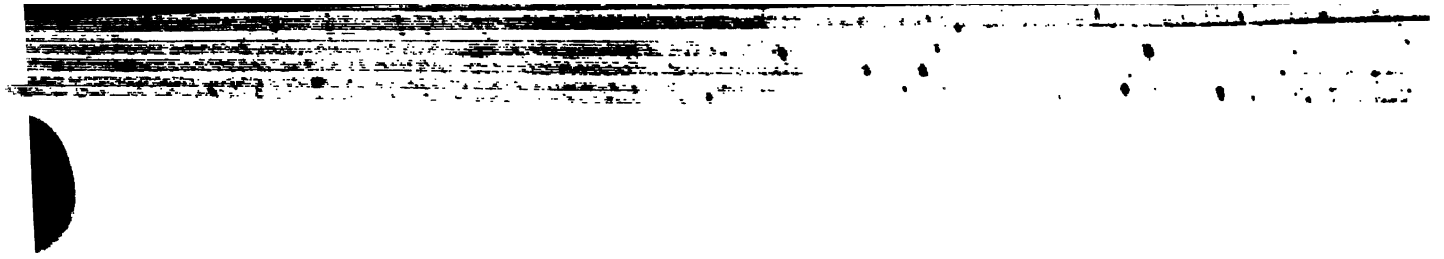
The third is complete in chiaroscuro, as far as engraving can be.

Now the dignity and virtue of the plates is in the exactly inverse ratio of their fulness in chiaroscuro.

Bandini's is excellent work, and of the very highest school. Durer's entirely accomplished work, but of an inferior school. And Beaugrand's, excellent work, but of a vulgar and non-classical school.

III

" At ev'ning, from the top of Fesole."



And these relations of the schools are to be determined by the quality in the *lines;* we shall find that in proportion as the light and shade is neglected, the lines are studied; that those of Bandini are perfect; of Durer perfect, only with a lower perfection; but of Beaugrand, entirely faultful.

130. I have just explained to you that in modern engraving the lines are cut in clean furrow, widened, it may be, by successive cuts; but, whether it be fine or thick, retaining always, when printed, the aspect of a continuous line drawn with the pen, and entirely black throughout its whole course.

Now we may increase the delicacy of this line to any extent by simply printing it in grey colour instead of black. I obtained some very beautiful results of this kind in the later volumes of 'Modern Painters,' with Mr. Armytage's help, by using subdued purple tints; but, in any case, the line thus engraved must be monotonous in its character, and cannot be expressive of the finest qualities of form.

Accordingly, the old Florentine workmen constructed the line *itself,* in important places, of successive minute touches, so that it became a chain of delicate links which could be opened or closed

at pleasure.* If you will examine through a lens the outline of the face of this Astrology, you will find it is traced with an exquisite series of minute touches, susceptible of accentuation or change absolutely at the engraver's pleasure; and, in result, corresponding to the finest conditions of a pencil line drawing by a consummate master. In the fine plates of this period, you have thus the united powers of the pen and pencil, and both absolutely secure and multipliable.

131. I am a little proud of having independently discovered, and had the patience to carry out, this Florentine method of execution for myself, when I was a boy of thirteen. My good drawing-master had given me some copies calculated to teach me freedom of hand; the touches were rapid and vigorous,—many of them in mechanically regular zigzags, far beyond any capacity of mine to imitate in the bold way in which they were done. But I was resolved to have them, somehow; and actually facsimilied a considerable portion of the drawing in the Florentine manner, with the finest point I could

* The method was first developed in engraving designs on silver—numbers of lines being executed with dots by the punch, for variety's sake. For niello, and printing, a transverse cut was substituted for the blow. The entire style is connected with the later Roman and Byzantine method of drawing lines with the drill hole, in marble. See above, Lecture II., Section 70.

cut to my pencil, taking a quarter of an hour to forge out the likeness of one return in the zigzag which my master carried down through twenty returns in two seconds; and so successfully, that he did not detect my artifice till I showed it him,—on which he forbade me ever to do the like again. And it was only thirty years afterwards that I found I had been quite right after all, and working like Baccio Bandini! But the patience which carried me through that early effort, served me well through all the thirty years, and enabled me to analyze, and in a measure imitate, the method of work employed by every master; so that, whether you believe me or not at first, you will find what I tell you of their superiority, or inferiority, to be true.

132. When lines are studied with this degree of care, you may be sure the master will leave room enough for you to see them and enjoy them, and not use any at random. All the finest engravers, therefore, leave much white paper, and use their entire power on the outlines.

133. Next to them come the men of the Renaissance schools, headed by Durer, who, less careful of the beauty and refinement of the line, delight in its vigour, accuracy, and complexity. And the essential difference between these men and the moderns is

that these central masters cut their line for the most part with a single furrow, giving it depth by force of hand or wrist, and retouching, *not in the furrow itself, but with others beside it.** Such work can only be done well on copper, and it can display all faculty of hand or wrist, precision of eye, and accuracy of knowledge, which a human creature can possess. But the dotted or hatched line is not used in this central style, and the higher conditions of beauty never thought of.

In the Astrology of Bandini,—and remember that the Astrologia of the Florentine meant what we mean by Astronomy, and much more,—he wishes you first to look at the face: the lip half open, faltering in wonder; the amazed, intense, dreaming gaze; the pure dignity of forehead, undisturbed by terrestrial thought. None of these things could be so much as attempted in Durer's method; he can engrave flowing hair, skin of animals, bark of trees, wreathings of metal-work, with the free hand; also, with laboured chiaroscuro, or with sturdy line, he can reach expressions of sadness, or gloom, or pain, or soldierly strength,—but pure beauty,—never.

134. Lastly, you have the Modern school, deepen-

* This most important and distinctive character was pointed out to me by Mr. Burgess.

ing its lines in successive cuts. The instant consequence of the introduction of this method is the restriction of curvature; you cannot follow a complex curve again with precision through its furrow. If you are a dextrous ploughman, you can drive your plough any number of times along the simple curve. But you cannot repeat again exactly the motions which cut a variable one.* You may retouch it, energize it, and deepen it in parts, but you cannot cut it all through again equally. And the retouching and energizing in parts is a living and intellectual process; but the cutting all through, equally, a mechanical one. The difference is exactly such as that between the dexterity of turning out two similar mouldings from a lathe, and carving them with the free hand, like a Pisan sculptor. And although splendid intellect, and subtlest sensibility, have been spent on the production of some modern plates, the mechanical element introduced by their manner of execution always overpowers both; nor *can any plate of consummate value ever be produced in the modern method.*

135. Nevertheless, in landscape, there are two examples in your Reference series, of insuperable

* This point will be further examined and explained in the Appendix.

skill and extreme beauty: Miller's plate, before instanced, of the Grand Canal, Venice; and E. Goodall's of the upper fall of the Tees. The men who engraved these plates might have been exquisite artists; but their patience and enthusiasm were held captive in the false system of lines, and we lost the painters; while the engravings, wonderful as they are, are neither of them worth a Turner etching, scratched in ten minutes with the point of an old fork; and the common types of such elaborate engraving are none of them worth a single frog, pig, or puppy, out of the corner of a Bewick vignette.

136. And now, I think, you cannot fail to understand clearly what you are to look for in engraving, as a separate art from that of painting. Turn back to the 'Astrologia' as a perfect type of the purest school. She is gazing at stars, and crowned with them. But the stars are *black* instead of shining! You cannot have a more decisive and absolute proof that you must not look in engraving for chiaroscuro.

Nevertheless, her body is half in shade, and her left foot; and she casts a shadow, and there is a bar of shade behind her.

All these are merely so much acceptance of shade as may relieve the forms, and give value to the linear

IV.

"By the Springs of Parnassus."

portions. The face, though turned from the light, is shadowless.

Again. Every lock of the hair is designed and set in its place with the subtlest care, but there is no lustre attempted,—no texture,—no mystery. The plumes of the wings are set studiously in their places,—they, also, lustreless. That even their filaments are not drawn, and that the broad curve embracing them ignores the anatomy of a bird's wing, are conditions of design, not execution. Of these in a future lecture.*

137. The 'Poesia,' Plate IV., opposite, is a still more severe, though not so generic, an example; its decorative foreground reducing it almost to the rank of goldsmith's ornamentation. I need scarcely point out to you that the flowing water shows neither lustre nor reflection; but notice that the observer's attention is supposed to be so close to every dark touch of the graver that he will see the minute dark spots which indicate the sprinkled shower falling from the vase into the pool.

138. This habit of strict and calm attention, constant in the artist, and expected in the observer, makes all the difference between the art of Intellect, and of mere sensation. For every

* See Appendix, Article I.

detail of this plate has a meaning, if you ca to understand it. This is Poetry, sitting by th fountain of Castalia, which flows first out of formal urn, to show that it is not artless; but th rocks of Parnassus are behind, and on the top them only one tree, like a mushroom with a thic stalk. You at first are inclined to say, How ver absurd, to put only one tree on Parnassus! bu this one tree is the Immortal Plane Tree, plante by Agamemnon, and at once connects our Poesi with the Iliad. Then, this is the hem of the rob of Poetry,—this is the divine vegetation whic springs up under her feet,—this is the heave and earth united by her power,—this is the fountai of Castalia flowing out afresh among the grass,— and these are the drops with which, out of a pitcher, Poetry is nourishing the fountain of Cas talia.

All which you may find out if you happen t know anything about Castalia, or about poetry; an pleasantly think more upon, for yourself. But th poor dunces, Sandro and Baccio, feeling themselve but 'goffi nell' arte,' have no hope of telling you a this, except suggestively. They can't engrave gras of Parnassus, nor sweet springs so as to look lik water; but they can make a pretty damaske surface with ornamental leaves, and flowing line

and so leave you something to think of—if you will.

139. 'But a great many people won't, and a great many more can't; and surely the finished engravings are much more delightful, and the only means we have of giving any idea of finished pictures, out of our reach.'

Yes, all that is true; and when we examine the effects of line engraving upon taste in recent art, we will discuss these matters; for the present, let us be content with knowing what the best work is, and why it is so. Although, however, I do not now press further my cavils at the triumph of modern line engraving, I must assign to you, in few words, the reason of its recent decline. Engravers complain that photography and cheap woodcutting have ended their finer craft. No complaint can be less grounded. They themselves destroyed their own craft, by vulgarizing it. Content in their beautiful mechanism, they ceased to learn, and to feel, as artists; they put themselves under the order of publishers and printsellers; they worked indiscriminately from whatever was put into their hands,—from Bartlett as willingly as from Turner, and from Mulready as carefully as from Raphael. They filled the windows of printsellers, the pages of gift books, with elaborate rubbish, and piteous abortions of

delicate industry. They worked cheap, and cheaper, —smoothly, and more smoothly,—they got armies of assistants, and surrounded themselves with schools of mechanical tricksters, learning their stale tricks with blundering avidity. They had fallen—before the days of photography—into providers of frontispieces for housekeepers' pocket-books. I do not know if photography itself, their redoubted enemy, has even now ousted them from that last refuge.

140. Such the fault of the engraver,—very pardonable; scarcely avoidable, — however fatal. Fault mainly of humility. But what has *your* fault been, gentlemen? what the patrons' fault, who have permitted so wide waste of admirable labour, so pathetic a uselessness of obedient genius? It was yours to have directed, yours to have raised and rejoiced in, the skill, the modesty, the patience of this entirely gentle and industrious race;—copyists with their *heart*. The common painter-copyists who encumber our European galleries with their easels and pots, are, almost without exception, persons too stupid to be painters, and too lazy to be engravers. The real copyists—the men who can put their soul into another's work—are employed at home, in their narrow rooms, striving to make their good work profitable to all men. And in their submission to the public taste they are

truly national servants as much as Prime Ministers are. They fulfil the demand of the nation; what, as a people, you wish to have for possession in art, these men are ready to give you.

And what have you hitherto asked of them?—Ramsgate Sands, and Dolly Vardens, and the Paddington Station,—these, I think, are typical of your chief demands; the cartoons of Raphael—which you don't care to see themselves; and, by way of a flight into the empyrean, the Madonna di San Sisto. And, literally, there are hundreds of cities and villages in Italy in which roof and wall are blazoned with the noblest divinity and philosophy ever imagined by men; and of all this treasure, I can, as far as I know, give you not *one* example, in line engraving, by an English hand!

Well, you are in the main matter right in this. You want essentially Ramsgate Sands and the Paddington Station, because there you can see yourselves.

Make yourselves, then, worthy to be seen for ever, and let English engraving become noble as the record of English loveliness and honour.

LECTURE V.

DESIGN IN THE GERMAN SCHOOLS OF ENGRAVING.

141. BY reference to the close of the preface to 'Eagle's Nest,' you will see, gentlemen, that I meant these lectures, from the first, rather to lead you to the study of the characters of two great men, than to interest you in the processes of a secondary form of art. As I draw my materials into the limited form necessary for the hour, I find my divided purpose doubly failing; and would fain rather use my time to-day in supplying the defects of my last lecture, than in opening the greater subject, which I must treat with still more lamentable inadequacy. Nevertheless, you must not think it is for want of time that I omit reference to other celebrated engravers, and insist on the special power of these two only. Many not inconsiderable reputations are founded merely on the curiosity of collectors of prints, or on partial skill in the management of processes; others, though resting on more secure bases, are still of no

importance to you in the general history of art; whereas you will find the work of Holbein and Botticelli determining for you, without need of any farther range, the principal questions of moment in the relation of the Northern and Southern schools of design. Nay, a wider method of inquiry would only render your comparison less accurate in result. It is only in Holbein's majestic range of capacity, and only in the particular phase of Teutonic life which his art adorned, that the problem can be dealt with on fair terms. We Northerns can advance no fairly comparable antagonist to the artists of the South, except at that one moment, and in that one man. Rubens cannot for an instant be matched with Tintoret, nor Memling with Lippi; while Reynolds only rivals Titian in what he learned from him. But in Holbein and Botticelli we have two men trained independently, equal in power of intellect, similar in material and mode of work, contemporary in age, correspondent in disposition. The relation between them is strictly typical of the constant aspects to each other of the Northern and Southern schools.

142. Their point of closest contact is in the art of engraving, and this art is developed entirely as the servant of the great passions which perturbed or polluted Europe in the fifteenth century. The

impulses which it obeys are all new; and it obeys them with its own nascent plasticity of temper. Painting and sculpture are only modified by them; but engraving is educated.

These passions are in the main three; namely,

1. The thirst for classical literature, and the forms of proud and false taste which arose out of it, in the position it had assumed as the enemy of Christianity.
2. The pride of science, enforcing (in the particular domain of Art) accuracy of perspective, shade, and anatomy, never before dreamed of.
3. The sense of error and iniquity in the theological teaching of the Christian Church, felt by the highest intellects of the time, and necessarily rendering the formerly submissive religious art impossible.

To-day, then, our task is to examine the peculiar characters of the Design of the Northern Schools of Engraving, as affected by these great influences.

143. I have not often, however, used the word 'design,' and must clearly define the sense in which I now use it. It is vaguely used in common art-parlance; often as if it meant merely the drawing of a picture, as distinct from its colour; and in

other still more inaccurate ways. The accurate and proper sense, underlying all these, I must endeavour to make clear to you.

'Design' properly signifies that power in any art-work which has a purpose other than of imitation, and which is 'designed,' composed, or separated to that end. It implies the rejection of some things, and the insistance upon others, with a given object.*

Let us take progressive instances. Here is a group of prettily dressed peasant children, charmingly painted by a very able modern artist—not absolutely without design, for he really wishes to show you how pretty peasant children can be, (and, in so far, is wiser and kinder than Murillo, who likes

* If you paint a bottle only to amuse the spectator by showing him how like a painting may be to a bottle, you cannot be considered, in art-philosophy, as a designer. But if you paint the cork flying out of the bottle, and the contents arriving in an arch at the mouth of a recipient glass, you are so far forth a designer or signer; probably meaning to express certain ultimate facts respecting, say, the hospitable disposition of the landlord of the house; but at all events representing the bottle and glass in a designed, and not merely natural, manner. Not merely natural—nay, in some sense non-natural, or supernatural. And all great artists show both this fantastic condition of mind in their work, and show that it has arisen out of a communicative or didactic purpose. They are the Sign-painters of God.

I have added this note to the lecture in copying my memoranda of it here at Assisi, June 9th, being about to begin work in the Tavern, or Tabernaculum, of the Lower Church, with its variously significant four great 'signs.'

to show how ugly they can be); also, his group is agreeably arranged, and its component children carefully chosen. Nevertheless, any summer's day, near any country village, you may come upon twenty groups in an hour as pretty as this; and may see—if you have eyes—children in them twenty times prettier than these. A photograph, if it could render them perfectly, and in colour, would far excel the charm of this painting; for in it, good and clever as it is, there is nothing supernatural, and much that is sub-natural.

144. Beside this group of, in every sense of the word, 'artless' little country girls, I will now set one—in the best sense of the word—'artful' little country girl,—a sketch by Gainsborough.

You never saw her like before. Never will again, now that Gainsborough is dead. No photography,—no science,—no industry, will touch or reach for an instant this *super*-naturalness. You will look vainly through the summer fields for such a child. "Nor up the lawn, nor by the wood," is she. Whence do you think this marvellous charm has come? Alas! if we knew, would not we all be Gainsboroughs? This only you may practically ascertain, as surely as that a flower will die if you cut its root away, that you cannot alter a single touch in Gainsborough's work without injury to the

whole. Half a dozen spots, more or less, in the printed gowns of these other children whom I first showed you, will not make the smallest difference to them; nor a lock or two more or less in their hair, nor a dimple or two more or less in their cheeks. But if you alter one wave of the hair of Gainsborough's girl, the child is gone. Yet the art is so subtle, that I do not expect you to believe this. It looks so instinctive, so easy, so 'chanceux,'—the French word is better than ours. Yes, and in their more accurate sense, also, 'Il a de la chance.' A stronger Designer than he was with him. He could not tell you himself how the thing was done.

145. I proceed to take a more definite instance—this Greek head of the Lacinian Juno. The design or appointing of the forms now entirely prevails over the resemblance to Nature. No real hair could ever be drifted into these wild lines, which mean the wrath of the Adriatic winds round the Cape of Storms.

And yet, whether this be uglier or prettier than Gainsborough's child—(and you know already what *I* think about it, that no Greek goddess was ever half so pretty as an English girl, of pure clay and temper,)—uglier or prettier, it is more dignified and impressive. It at least belongs to the domain

of a lordlier, more majestic, more guiding and ordaining art.

146. I will go back another five hundred years, and place an Egyptian beside the Greek divinity. The resemblance to Nature is now all but lost, the ruling law has become all. The lines are reduced to an easily counted number, and their arrangement is little more than a decorative sequence of pleasant curves cut in porphyry,—in the upper part of their contour following the outline of a woman's face in profile, over-crested by that of a hawk, on a kind of pedestal. But that the sign-engraver meant by his hawk, Immortality, and by her pedestal, the House or Tavern of Truth, is of little importance now to the passing traveller, not yet preparing to take the sarcophagus for his place of rest.

147. How many questions are suggested to us by these transitions! Is beauty contrary to law, and grace attainable only through license? What we gain in language, shall we lose in thought? and in what we add of labour, more and more forget its ends?

Not so.

Look at this piece of Sandro's work, the Libyan Sibyl.*

* Plate X., Lecture VI.

It is as ordered and normal as the Egyptian's; as graceful and facile as Gainsborough's. It retains the majesty of old religion; it is invested with the joy of newly-awakened childhood.

Mind, I do not expect you—do not wish you—to enjoy Botticelli's dark engraving as much as Gainsborough's aerial sketch; for due comparison of the men, painting should be put beside painting. But there is enough even in this copy of the Florentine plate to show you the junction of the two powers in it—of prophecy, and delight.

148. Will these two powers, do you suppose, be united in the same manner in the contemporary Northern art? That Northern school is my subject to-day; and yet I give you, as type of the intermediate condition between Egypt and England—not Holbein, but Botticelli. I am obliged to do this; because in the Southern art, the religious temper remains unconquered by the doctrines of the Reformation. Botticelli was—what Luther wished to be, but could not be—a reformer still believing in the Church: his mind is at peace; and his art, therefore, can pursue the delight of beauty, and yet remain prophetic. But it was far otherwise in Germany. There the Reformation of manners became the destruction of faith; and art therefore, not a prophecy, but a protest. It is the chief

work of the greatest Protestant who ever lived,* which I ask you to study with me to-day.

149. I said that the power of engraving had developed itself during the introduction of three new —(practically and vitally new, that is to say)— elements, into the minds of men: elements which briefly may be expressed thus:

1. Classicism, and Literary Science.
2. Medicine, and Physical Science.†
3. Reformation, and Religious Science.

And first of Classicism.

You feel, do not you, in this typical work of Gainsborough's, that his subject as well as his picture is 'artless' in a lovely sense;—nay, not only artless, but ignorant, and unscientific, in a beautiful way? You would be afterwards remorseful, I think, and angry with yourself—seeing the effect produced on her face—if you were to ask this little lady to

* I do not mean the greatest teacher of reformed faith; but the greatest protestant against faith unreformed.

† It has become the permitted fashion among modern mathematicians, chemists, and apothecaries, to call themselves 'scientific men, as opposed to theologians, poets, and artists. They know their sphere to be a separate one; but their ridiculous notion of its being a peculiarly scientific one ought not to be allowed in our Universities. There is a science of Morals, a science of History, a science of Grammar, a science of Music, and a science of Painting; and all these are quite beyond comparison higher fields for human intellect, and require accuracies of intenser observation, than either chemistry, electricity, or geology.

spell a very long word? Also, if you wished to know how many times the sevens go in forty-nine, you would perhaps wisely address yourself elsewhere. On the other hand, you do not doubt that *this* lady* knows very well how many times the sevens go in forty-nine, and is more Mistress of Arts than any of us are Masters of them.

150. You have then, in the one case, a beautiful simplicity, and a blameless ignorance; in the other, a beautiful artfulness, and a wisdom which you do not dread,—or, at least, even though dreading, love. But you know also that we may remain in a hateful and culpable ignorance; and, as I fear too many of us in competitive effort feel, become possessed of a hateful knowledge.

Ignorance, therefore, is not evil absolutely; but, innocent, may be loveable.

Knowledge also is not good absolutely; but, guilty, may be hateful.

So, therefore, when I now repeat my former statement, that the first main opposition between the Northern and Southern schools is in the simplicity of the one, and the scholarship of the other, that statement may imply sometimes the superiority of the North, and sometimes of the South. You may have a heavenly simplicity

* The Cumæan Sibyl, Plate VII., Lecture VI.

opposed to a hellish (that is to say, a lustful and arrogant) scholarship; or you may have a barbarous and presumptuous ignorance opposed to a divine and disciplined wisdom. Ignorance opposed to learning in both cases; but evil to good, as the case may be.

151. For instance: the last time I was standing before Raphael's arabesques in the Loggias of the Vatican, I wrote down in my pocket-book the description, or, more modestly speaking, the inventory, of the small portion of that infinite wilderness of sensual fantasy which happened to be opposite me. It consisted of a woman's face, with serpents for hair, and a virgin's breasts, with stumps for arms, ending in blue butterflies' wings, the whole changing at the waist into a goat's body, which ended below in an obelisk upside-down, to the apex at the bottom of which were appended, by graceful chains, an altar, and two bunches of grapes.

Now you know in a moment, by a glance at this 'design'—beautifully struck with free hand, and richly gradated in colour,—that the master was familiar with a vast range of art and literature: that he knew all about Egyptian sphinxes, and Greek Gorgons; about Egyptian obelisks, and Hebrew altars; about Hermes, and Venus, and Bacchus, and satyrs, and goats, and grapes.

complete of the highest philosophies both of the Greek nation, and of his own; and could as easily have painted, had it been asked of him, Draco, or Numa, or Justinian, as the herdsman of Jethro.

154. It is rarely that we can point to an opposition between faultful, because insolent, ignorance, and virtuous, because gracious, knowledge, so direct, and in so parallel elements, as in this instance. In general, the analysis is much more complex. It is intensely difficult to indicate the mischief of involuntary and modest ignorance, calamitous only in a measure; fruitful in its lower field, yet sorrowfully condemned to that lower field—not by sin, but fate.

When first I introduced you to Bewick, we closed our too partial estimate of his entirely magnificent powers with one sorrowful concession—he could draw a pig, but not a Venus.

Eminently he could so, because—which is still more sorrowfully to be conceded—he liked the pig best. I have put now in your educational series a whole galaxy of pigs by him; but, hunting all the fables through, I find only one Venus, and I think you will all admit that she is an unsatisfactory Venus.* There is honest simplicity here; but you regret it; you miss something that you find in Holbein, much more in Botticelli. You

* Lecture III., p. 87.

see in a moment that this man knows nothing of Sphinxes, or Muses, or Graces, or Aphrodites; and, besides, that, knowing nothing, he would have no liking for them even if he saw them; but much prefers the style of a well-to-do English housekeeper with corkscrew curls, and a portly person.

155. You miss something, I said, in Bewick which you find in Holbein. But do you suppose Holbein himself, or any other Northern painter, could wholly quit himself of the like accusations? I told you, in the second of these lectures, that the Northern temper, refined from savageness, and the Southern, redeemed from decay, met, in Florence. Holbein and Botticelli are the purest types of the two races. Holbein is a civilized boor; Botticelli a reanimate Greek. Holbein was polished by companionship with scholars and kings, but remains always a burgher of Augsburg in essential nature. Bewick and he are alike in temper; only the one is untaught, the other perfectly taught. But Botticelli *needs* no teaching. He is, by his birth, scholar and gentleman to the heart's core. Christianity itself can only inspire him, not refine him. He is as tried gold chased by the jeweller,—the roughest part of him is the outside.

Now how differently must the newly recovered scholastic learning tell upon these two men. It

is all out of Holbein's way; foreign to his nature, [illegible] probably cumbrous. But Botticelli receives it as a child in later years recovers the forgotten dearness of a nursery tale; and is more himself, and again and again himself, as he breathes the air of Greece, and hears, in his own Italy, the lost voice of the Sibyl murmur again by the Avernus Lake.

156. It is not, as we have seen, every one of the Southern race who can thus receive it. But it graces them all; is at once a part of their being; destroys them, if it is to destroy, the more utterly because it so enters into their natures. It destroys Raphael; but it graces him, and is a part of him. It all but destroys Mantegna; but it graces him. And it does not hurt Holbein, just because it does *not* grace him—never is for an instant a part of him. It is with Raphael as with some charming young girl who has a new and beautifully made dress brought to her, which entirely becomes her,—so much, that in a little while, thinking of nothing else, she becomes *it;* and is only the decoration of her dress. But with Holbein it is as if you brought the same dress to a stout farmer's daughter who was going to dine at the Hall; and begged her to put it on that she might not discredit the company. She puts it on to please

you; looks entirely ridiculous in it, but is not spoiled by it,—remains herself, in spite of it.

157. You probably have never noticed the extreme awkwardness of Holbein in wearing this new dress; you would the less do so because his own people think him all the finer for it, as the farmer's wife would probably think her daughter. Dr. Woltmann, for instance, is enthusiastic in praise of the splendid architecture in the background of his Annunciation. A fine mess it must have made in the minds of simple German maidens, in their notion of the Virgin at home! I cannot show you this Annunciation; but I have under my hand one of Holbein's Bible cuts, of the deepest seriousness and import—his illustration of the Canticles, showing the Church as the bride of Christ.

You could not find a subject requiring more tenderness, purity, or dignity of treatment. In this maid, symbolizing the Church, you ask for the most passionate humility, the most angelic beauty: "Behold, thou art fair, my dove." Now here is Holbein's ideal of that fairness; here is his "Church as the Bride."

I am sorry to associate this figure in your minds, even for a moment, with the passages it is supposed to illustrate; but the lesson is too important to be omitted. Remember, Holbein represents the temper

of Northern Reformation. He has all the nobleness of that temper, but also all its baseness. He repre-

sents, indeed, the revolt of German truth against Italian lies; but he represents also the revolt of German animalism against Hebrew imagination. This figure of Holbein's is half-way from Solomon's mystic bride, to Rembrandt's wife, sitting on his knee while he drinks.

But the key of the question is not in this. Florentine animalism has at this time, also, enough to say for itself. But Florentine animalism, at this time, feels the joy of a gentleman, not of a churl. And a Florentine, whatever he does,—be it virtuous or sinful, chaste or lascivious, severe or extravagant,—does it with a grace.

158. You think, perhaps, that Holbein's Solomon's bride is so ungraceful chiefly because she is overdressed, and has too many feathers and jewels. No; a Florentine would have put any quantity of feathers and jewels on her, and yet never lost her grace. You shall see him do it, and that to a fantastic degree, for I have an example under my hand. Look back, first, to Bewick's Venus (Lect. III., p. 87). You can't accuse her of being overdressed. She complies with every received modern principle of taste. Sir Joshua's precept that drapery should be "drapery, and nothing more," is observed more strictly even by Bewick than by Michael Angelo. If the absence of decoration could exalt the beauty of his Venus, here had been her perfection.

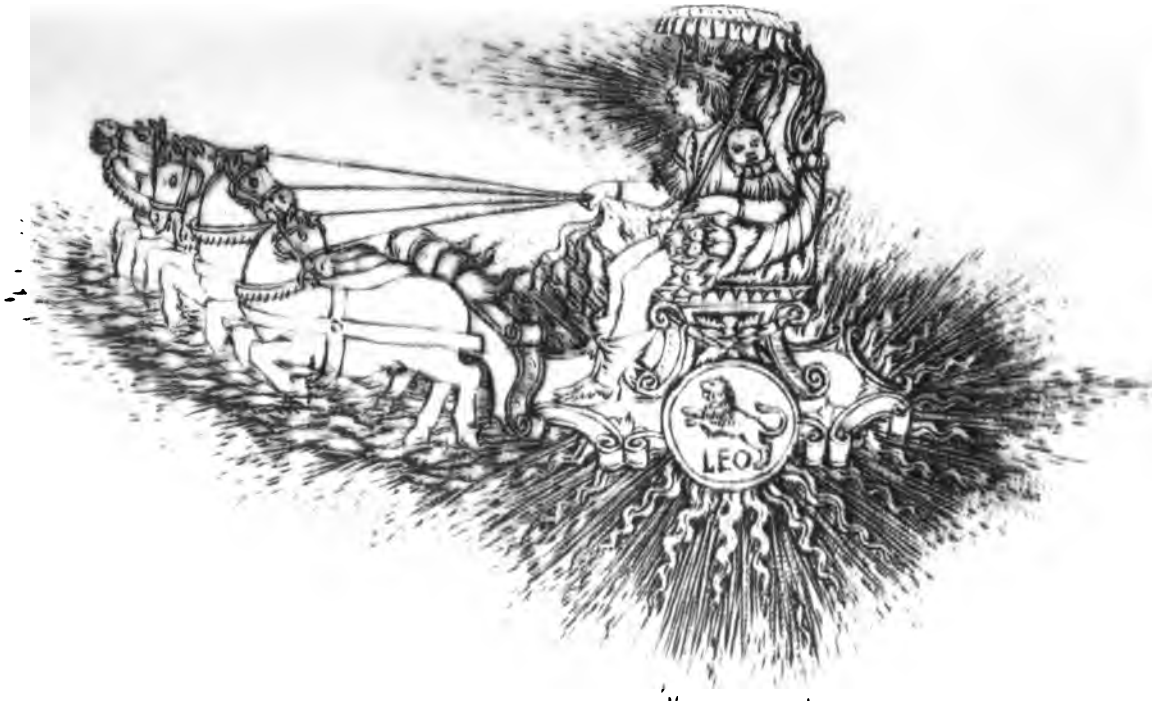
Now look back to Plate II. (Lect. IV.), by Sandro; Venus in her planet, the ruling star of Florence. Anything more grotesque in conception, more unrestrained in fancy of ornament, you cannot find, even in the final days of the Renaissance. Yet Venus holds her divinity through all; she will become majestic to you as you gaze; and there is not a line of her chariot wheels, of her buskins, or of her throne, which you may not see was engraved by a gentleman.

159. Again, Plate V., opposite, is a facsimile of another engraving of the same series—the Sun in

Leo. It is even more extravagant in accessories than the Venus. You see the Sun's epaulettes before you see the sun; the spiral scrolls of his chariot, and the black twisted rays of it, might, so far as types of form only are considered, be a design for some modern court-dress star, to be made in diamonds. And yet all this wild ornamentation is, if you will examine it, more purely Greek in spirit than the Apollo Belvidere.

You know I have told you, again and again, that the soul of Greece is her veracity; that what to other nations were fables and symbolisms, to her became living facts—living gods. The fall of Greece was instant when her gods again became fables. The Apollo Belvidere is the work of a sculptor to whom Apollonism is merely an elegant idea on which to exhibit his own skill. He does not himself feel for an instant that the handsome man in the unintelligible attitude,* with drapery hung over his left arm, as it would be hung to dry over a clothes-line, is the Power of the Sun. But the Florentine believes in Apollo with his whole mind,

* I read somewhere, lately, a new and very ingenious theory about the attitude of the Apollo Belvidere, proving, to the author's satisfaction, that the received notion about watching the arrow was all a mistake. The paper proved, at all events, one thing—namely, the statement in the text. For an attitude which has been always hitherto taken to mean one thing, and is plausibly asserted now to mean another, must be in itself unintelligible.



V

"Heat considered as a Mode of Motion:"

Florentine Natural Philosophy.

and is trying to explain his strength in every touch.

For instance; I said just now, "You see the sun's epaulettes before the sun." Well, *don't* you, usually, as it rises? Do you not continually mistake a luminous cloud for it, or wonder where it is, behind one? Again, the face of the Apollo Belvidere is agitated by anxiety, passion, and pride. Is the sun's likely to be so, rising on the evil and the good? This Prince sits crowned and calm: look at the quiet fingers of the hand holding the sceptre,—at the restraint of the reins merely by a depression of the wrist.

160. You have to look carefully for those fingers holding the sceptre, because the hand—which a great anatomist would have made so exclusively interesting—is here confused with the ornamentation of the arm of the chariot on which it rests. But look what the ornamentation is;—fruit and leaves, abundant, in the mouth of a cornucopia. A quite vulgar and meaningless ornament in ordinary renaissance work. Is it so here, think you? Are not the leaves and fruits of earth in the Sun's hand? *

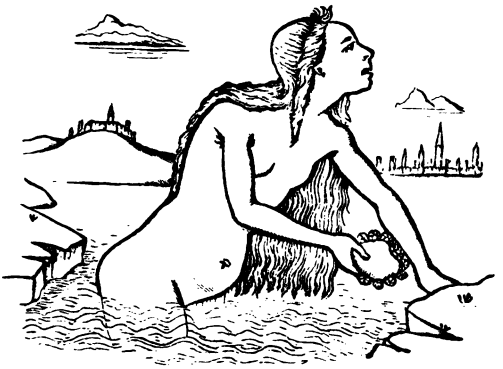
You thought, perhaps, when I spoke just now of the action of the right hand, that less than a depres-

* It may be asked, why not corn also? Because that belongs to Ceres, who is equally one of the great gods.

truthful, was also restrained, and never but under majesty of law; while Gothic work was true, in the perfect law of Liberty or Franchise. And now I give you in facsimile (Plate VI.) the two Aphrodites thus compared—the Aphrodite Thalassia of the Tyrrhene seas, and the Aphrodite Urania of the Greek skies. You may not at first like the Tuscan best; and why she is the best, though both are noble, again I must defer explaining to next lecture. But now turn back to Bewick's Venus, and compare her with the Tuscan Venus of the Stars, (Plate II.); and then here, in Plate VI., with the Tuscan Venus of the Seas, and the Greek Venus of the Sky. Why is the English one vulgar? What is it, in the three others, which makes them, if not beautiful, at least refined?—every one of them 'designed' and drawn, indisputably, by a gentleman?

I never have been so puzzled by any subject of analysis as, for these ten years, I have been by this. Every answer I give, however plausible it seems at first, fails in some way, or in some cases. But there is the point for you, more definitely put, I think, than in any of my former books;—at present, for want of time, I must leave it to your own thoughts.

163. II. The second influence under which engraving developed itself, I said, was that of medicine and



VI.

Fairness of the Sea and Air.

In VENICE and ATHENS.

the physical sciences. Gentlemen, the most audacious, and the most valuable, statement which I have yet made to you on the subject of practical art, in these rooms, is that of the evil resulting from the study of anatomy. It is a statement so audacious, that not only for some time I dared not make it to you, but for ten years, at least, I dared not make it to myself. I saw, indeed, that whoever studied anatomy was in a measure injured by it; but I kept attributing the mischief to secondary causes. It *can't* be this drink itself that poisons them, I said always. This drink is medicinal and strengthening: I see that it kills them, but it must be because they drink it cold when they have been hot, or they take something else with it that changes it into poison. The drink itself *must* be good. Well, gentlemen, I found out the drink itself to be poison at last, by the breaking of my choicest Venice glass. I could not make out what it was that had killed Tintoret, and laid it long to the charge of chiaroscuro. It was only after my thorough study of his Paradise, in 1870, that I gave up this idea, finding the chiaroscuro, which I had thought exaggerated was, in all original and undarkened passages, beautiful and most precious. And then at last I got hold of the true clue: "Il disegno di Michel Agnolo." And the moment I had dared to accuse that, it

explained everything; and I saw that the betraying demons of Italian art, led on by Michael Angelo, had been, not pleasure, but knowledge; not indolence, but ambition; and not love, but horror.

164. But when first I ventured to tell you this, I did not know, myself, the fact of all most conclusive for its confirmation. It will take me a little while to put it before you in its total force, and I must first ask your attention to a minor point. In one of the smaller rooms of the Munich Gallery is Holbein's painting of St. Margaret and St. Elizabeth of Hungary,—standard of his early religious work. Here is a photograph from the St. Elizabeth; and, in the same frame, a French lithograph of it. I consider it one of the most important pieces of comparison I have arranged for you, showing you at a glance the difference between true and false sentiment. Of that difference, generally, we cannot speak to-day, but one special result of it you are to observe;—the omission, in the French drawing, of Holbein's daring representation of disease, which is one of the vital honours of the picture. Quite one of the chief strengths of St. Elizabeth, in the Roman Catholic view, was in the courage of her dealing with disease, chiefly leprosy. Now observe, I say *Roman* Catholic view, very earnestly just now; I am not at all sure that it is

so in a Catholic view—that is to say, in an eternally Christian and Divine view. And this doubt, very nearly now a certainty, only came clearly into my mind the other day after many and many a year's meditation on it. I had read with great reverence all the beautiful stories about Christ's appearing as a leper, and the like; and had often pitied and rebuked myself alternately for my intense dislike and horror of disease. I am writing at this moment within fifty yards of the grave of St. Francis, and the story of the likeness of his feelings to mine had a little comforted me, and the tradition of his conquest of them again humiliated me; and I was thinking very gravely of this, and of the parallel instance of Bishop Hugo of Lincoln, always desiring to do service to the dead, as opposed to my own unmitigated and Louis-Quinze-like horror of funerals;—when by chance, in the cathedral of Palermo, a new light was thrown for me on the whole matter.

165. I was drawing the tomb of Frederick II., which is shut off by a grating from the body of the church; and I had, in general, quite an unusual degree of quiet and comfort at my work. But sometimes it was paralyzed by the unconscious interference of one of the men employed in some minor domestic services about the church. When

he had nothing to do, he used to come and seat himself near my grating, not to look at my work, (the poor wretch had no eyes, to speak of,) nor in any way meaning to be troublesome; but there was his habitual seat. His nose had been carried off by the most loathsome of diseases; there were two vivid circles of scarlet round his eyes; and as he sat, he announced his presence every quarter of a minute (if otherwise I could have forgotten it) by a peculiarly disgusting, loud, and long expectoration. On the second or third day, just as I had forced myself into some forgetfulness of him, and was hard at my work, I was startled from it again by the bursting out of a loud and cheerful conversation close to me; and on looking round, saw a lively young fledgling of a priest, seventeen or eighteen years old, in the most eager and spirited chat with the man in the chair. He talked, laughed, and spat, himself, companionably, in the merriest way, for a quarter of an hour; evidently without feeling the slightest disgust, or being made serious for an instant, by the aspect of the destroyed creature before him.

166. His own face was simply that of the ordinary vulgar type of thoughtless young Italians, rather beneath than above the usual standard; and I was certain, as I watched him, that he was not

at all my superior, but very much my inferior, in the coolness with which he beheld what was to me so dreadful. I was positive that he could look this man in the face, precisely because he could *not* look, discerningly, at any beautiful or noble thing; and that the reason I dared not, was because I had, spiritually, as much better eyes than the priest, as, bodily, than his companion.

Having got so much of clear evidence given me on the matter, it was driven home for me a week later, as I landed on the quay of Naples. Almost the first thing that presented itself to me was the sign of a travelling theatrical company, displaying the principal scene of the drama to be enacted on their classical stage. Fresh from the theatre of Taormina, I was curious to see the subject of the Neapolitan popular drama. It was the capture, by the police, of a man and his wife who lived by boiling children. One section of the police was coming in, armed to the teeth, through the passage; another section of the police, armed to the teeth, and with high feathers in its caps, was coming up through a trap-door. In fine dramatic unconsciousness to the last moment, like the clown in a pantomime, the child-boiler was represented as still industriously chopping up a child, pieces of which, ready for the pot, lay here

and there on the table in the middle of the picture. The child-boiler's wife, however, just as she was taking the top off the pot to put the meat in, had caught a glimpse of the foremost policeman, and stopped, as much in rage as in consternation.

167. Now it is precisely the same feeling, or want of feeling, in the lower Italian (nor always in the lower classes only) which makes him demand the kind of subject for his secular drama; and the Crucifixion and Pieta for his religious drama. The only part of Christianity he can enjoy is its horror; and even the saint or saintess are not always denying themselves severely, either by the contemplation of torture, or the companionship with disease.

Nevertheless, we must be cautious, on the other hand, to allow full value to the endurance, by tender and delicate persons, of what is really loathsome or distressful to them in the service of others; and I think this picture of Holbein's indicative of the exact balance and rightness of his own mind in this matter, and therefore of his power to conceive a true saint also. He had to represent St. Catherine's chief effort;—he paints her ministering to the sick, and, among them, is a leper; and finding it thus his duty to paint

leprosy, he courageously himself studies it from the life. Not to insist on its horror; but to assert it, to the needful point of fact, which he does with medical accuracy.

Now here is just a case in which science, in a subordinate degree, is really required for a spiritual and moral purpose. And you find Holbein does not shrink from it even in this extreme case in which it is most painful.

168. If, therefore, you *do* find him in other cases not using it, you may be sure he knew it to be unnecessary.

Now it may be disputable whether in order to draw a living Madonna, one need to know how many ribs she has; but it would have seemed indisputable that in order to draw a skeleton, one must know how many ribs *it* has.

Holbein is par excellence the draughtsman of skeletons. His painted Dance of Death was, and his engraved Dance of Death is, principal of such things, without any comparison or denial. He draws skeleton after skeleton, in every possible gesture; but never so much as counts their ribs! He neither knows nor cares how many ribs a skeleton has. There are always enough to rattle.

Monstrous, you think, in impudence,—Holbein for his carelessness, and I for defending him!

Nay, I triumph in him; nothing has ever more pleased me than this grand negligence. Nobody wants to know how many ribs a skeleton has, any more than how many bars a gridiron has, so long as the one can breathe, and the other broil; and still less, when the breath and the fire are both out.

169. But is it only of the bones, think you, that Holbein is careless?* Nay, incredible though it may seem to you,—but, to me, explanatory at once of much of his excellence,—he did not know anatomy at all! I told you in my Preface, already quoted, Holbein studies the face first, the body secondarily; but I had no idea, myself, how completely he had refused the venomous science of his day. I showed you a dead Christ of his, long ago. Can you match it with your academy drawings, think you? And yet he did not, and would not, know anatomy. *He* would not; but Durer would, and did:—went hotly into it—wrote books upon it, and upon 'proportions of the human body,' etc., etc., and all your modern recipes for painting flesh. How did his studies prosper his art?

* Or inventive! See Woltmann, p. 267. "The shin-bone, or the lower part of the arm, exhibit only one bone, while the upper arm and thigh are often allowed the luxury of two"!

People are always talking of his Knight and Death, and his Melancholia, as if those were his principal works. They are his characteristic ones, and show what he might have been, *without* his anatomy; but they were mere byeplay compared to his Greater Fortune, and Adam and Eve. Look at these. Here is his full energy displayed; here are both male and female forms drawn with perfect knowledge of their bones and muscles, and modes of action and digestion,—and I hope you are pleased.

But it is not anatomy only that Master Albert studies. He has a taste for optics also; and knows all about refraction and reflection. What with his knowledge of the skull inside, and the vitreous lens outside, if any man in the world is to draw an eye, here's the man to do it, surely! With a hand which can give lessons to John Bellini, and a care which would fain do all so that it can't be done better, and acquaintance with every crack in the cranium, and every humour in the lens,—if we can't draw an eye, we should just like to know who can! thinks Albert.

So having to engrave the portrait of Melancthon, instead of looking at Melancthon, as ignorant Holbein would have been obliged to do,—wise Albert looks at the room window; and finds it has four cross-bars in it, and knows scientifically

that the light on Melancthon's eye must be a reflection of the window with its four bars—and engraves it so, accordingly; and who shall dare to say, now, it isn't like Melancthon?

Unfortunately, however, it isn't, nor like any other person in his senses; but like a madman looking at somebody who disputes his hobby. While in this drawing of Holbein's, where a dim gray shadow leaves a mere crumb of white paper, —accidentally it seems, for all the fine scientific reflection,—behold, it is an eye indeed, and of a noble creature.

170. What is the reason? do you ask me; and is all the common teaching about generalization of details true, then?

No; not a syllable of it is true. Holbein is right, not because he draws more generally, but more truly, than Durer. Durer draws what he knows is there; but Holbein, only what he sees. And, as I have told you often before, the really scientific artist is he who not only asserts bravely what he *does* see, but confesses honestly what he does *not*. You must not draw all the hairs in an eyelash; not because it is sublime to generalize them, but because it is impossible to see them. How many hairs there are, a sign painter or anatomist may count; but how few of them you can see, it

is only the utmost masters, Carpaccio, Tintoret, Reynolds, and Velasquez, who count, or know.

171. Such was the effect, then, of his science upon Durer's ideal of beauty, and skill in portraiture. What effect had it on the temper and quantity of his work, as compared with poor ignorant Holbein's! You have only three portraits, by Durer, of the great men of his time, and those bad ones; while he toils his soul out to draw the hoofs of satyrs, the bristles of swine, and the distorted aspects of base women and vicious men.

What, on the contrary, has ignorant Holbein done for you? Shakspeare and he divide between them, by word and look, the Story of England under Henry and Elizabeth.

172. Of the effect of science on the art of Mantegna and Marc Antonio, (far more deadly than on Durer's,) I must tell you in a future lecture; the effect of it on their minds, I must partly refer to now, in passing to the third head of my general statement—the influence of new Theology. For Durer and Mantegna, chiefly because of their science, forfeited their place, not only as painters of men, but as servants of God. Neither of them has left one completely noble or completely didactic picture; while Holbein and

Botticelli [illegible] consummate pieces of art, [illegible] the way before the eyes of all men, to the purification of their Church and land.

[illegible] But the need of reformation presented itself to these two men last named in entirely different terms.

To Holbein, when the word of the Catholic Church proved false, and its deeds bloody; when he saw it selling permission of sin in his native Augsburg, and strewing the ashes of its enemies on the pure Alpine waters of Constance, what refuge was there for *him* in more ancient religion? Shall he worship Thor again, and mourn over the death of Balder? He reads Nature in her desolate and narrow truth, and she teaches him the Triumph of Death.

But, for Botticelli, the grand gods are old, are immortal. The priests may have taught falsely the story of the Virgin;—did they not also lie, in the name of Artemis, at Ephesus;—in the name of Aphrodite, at Cyprus?—but shall, therefore, Chastity or Love be dead, or the full moon paler over Arno? Saints of Heaven and Gods of Earth! shall *these* perish because vain men speak evil of them? Let *us* speak good for ever, and grave, as on the rock, for ages to come, the glory of Beauty, and the triumph of Faith.

174. Holbein had bitterer task.

Of old, the one duty of the painter had been to exhibit the virtues of this life, and hopes of the life to come. Holbein had to show the vices of this life, and to obscure the hope of the future. "Yes, we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, and fear all evil, for Thou art not with us, and Thy rod and Thy staff comfort us not." He does not choose this task. It is thrust upon him, —just as fatally as the burial of the dead is in a plague-struck city. These are the things he sees, and must speak. He will not become a better artist thereby; no drawing of supreme beauty, or beautiful things, will be possible to him. Yet we cannot say he ought to have done anything else, nor can we praise him specially in doing this. It is his fate; the fate of all the bravest in that day.

175. For instance, there is no scene about which a shallow and feeble painter would have been more sure to adopt the commonplaces of the creed of his time than the death of a child,—chiefly, and most of all, the death of a country child,—a little thing fresh from the cottage and the field. Surely for such an one, angels will wait by its sick bed, and rejoice as they bear its soul away; and over its shroud flowers will be

strewn, and the birds will sing by its grave. So your common sentimentalist would think, and paint. Holbein sees the facts, as they verily are, up to the point when vision ceases. He speaks, then no more.

The country labourer's cottage—the rain coming through its roof, the clay crumbling from its partitions, the fire lighted with a few chips and sticks on a raised piece of the mud floor,—such dais as can be contrived, for use, not for honour. The damp wood sputters; the smoke, stopped by the roof, though the rain is not, coils round again, and down. But the mother can warm the child's supper of bread and milk so—holding the pan by the long handle; and on mud floor though it be, they are happy,—she, and her child, and its brother,—if only they could be left so. They shall not be left so: the young thing must leave them—will never need milk warmed for it any more. It would fain stay,—sees no angels—feels only an icy grip on its hand, and that it cannot stay. Those who loved it shriek and tear their hair in vain, amazed in grief. 'Oh, little one, must you lie out in the fields then, not even under this poor torn roof of thy mother's to-night?'

176. Again: there was not in the old creed any

THE CHILD'S BEDTIME.

(Fig 5.) Fac-simile from Holbein's woodcut.

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THE ASIATIC

"HE THAT HATH EARS TO HEAR, LET HIM HEAR."
(Fig 6.) Fac-simile from Holbein's woodcut.

subject more definitely and constantly insisted on than the death of a miser. He had been happy, the old preachers thought, till then: but his hour has come; and the black covetousness of hell is awake and watching; the sharp harpy claws will clutch his soul. out of his mouth, and scatter his treasure for others. So the commonplace preacher and painter taught. Not so Holbein. The devil want to snatch his soul, indeed! Nay, he never *had* a soul, but of the devil's giving. His misery to begin on his deathbed! Nay, he had never an unmiserable hour of life. The fiend is with him now,—a paltry, abortive fiend, with no breath even to blow hot with. He supplies the hell-blast *with a machine.* It is winter, and the rich man has his furred cloak and cap, thick and heavy; the beggar, bareheaded to beseech him, skin and rags hanging about him together, touches his shoulder, but all in vain; there is other business in hand. More haggard than the beggar himself, wasted and palsied, the rich man counts with his fingers the gain of the years to come.

But of those years, infinite, that are to be, Holbein says nothing. 'I know not; I see not. This only I see, on this very winter's day, the low pale stumbling-block at your feet, the altogether by you unseen and forgotten Death. You shall

among them, the world is all cloak and clasp, instead of face or book; and the first object of their lives is to engrave their initials.

For us, in England, not even so much is at present to be hoped; and yet, singularly enough, it is more our modesty, unwisely submissive, than our vanity, which has destroyed our English school of engraving.

At the bottom of the pretty line engravings which used to represent, characteristically, our English skill, one saw always *two* inscriptions. At the left-hand corner, "Drawn by—so-and-so;" at the right-hand corner, "Engraved by—so-and-so." Only under the worst and cheapest plates—for the Stationers' Almanack, or the like,—one saw sometimes, "Drawn and engraved by—so-and-so," which meant nothing more than that the publisher would not go to the expense of an artist, and that the engraver haggled through as he could. (One fortunate exception, gentlemen, you have in the old drawings for your Oxford Almanack, though the publishers, I have no doubt, even in that case, employed the cheapest artist they could find.*) But in

* The drawings were made by Turner, and are now among the chief treasures of the Oxford Galleries. I ought to add some notice of Hogarth to this lecture in the Appendix; but fear I shall have no time: besides, though I have profound respect for Hogarth, as, in

as you would with Leonardo; nor 'How grandly they are composed,' as you would with Titian. You say only, 'Erasmus is surely there; and what a pleasant sight!' You don't think of Holbein at all. He has not even put in the minutest letter H, that I can see, to remind you of him. Drops his H's, I regret to say, often enough. 'My hand should be enough for you; what matters my name?' But now, look at Durer's. The very first thing you see, and at any distance, is this great square tablet with

"The image of Erasmus, drawn from the life by Albert Durer, 1526,"

and a great straddling A.D. besides. Then you see a cloak, and a table, and a pot, with flowers in it, and a heap of books with all their leaves and all their clasps, and all the little bits of leather gummed in to mark the places; and last of all you see Erasmus's face; and when you do see it, the most of it is wrinkles.

All egotism and insanity, this, gentlemen. Hard words to use; but not too hard to define the faults which rendered so much of Durer's great genius abortive, and to this day paralyze, among the details of a lifeless and ambitious precision, the student, no less than the artist, of German blood. For too many an Erasmus, too many a Durer,

full fire of temper in it, visibly governing its lines, as the wind does the fibres of cloud.

The value hitherto attached to Rembrandt's etchings, and others imitating them, depends on a true instinct in the public mind for this virtue of line. But etching is an indolent and blundering method at the best; and I do not doubt that you will one day be grateful for the severe disciplines of drawing required in these schools, in that they will have enabled you to know what a line may be, driven by a master's chisel on silver or marble, following, and fostering as it follows, the instantaneous strength of his determined thought.

LECTURE VI.

DESIGN IN THE FLORENTINE SCHOOLS OF ENGRAVING.

1. IN the first of these lectures, I stated to you their subject, as the investigation of the engraved work of a group of men, to whom engraving, as a means of popular address, was above all precious, because their art was distinctively didactic.

Some of my hearers must be aware that, of late years, the assertion that art should be didactic has been clamorously and violently derided by the countless crowd of artists who have nothing to represent, and of writers who have nothing to say; and that the contrary assertion—that art consists only in pretty colours and fine words,—is accepted, readily enough, by a public which rarely pauses to look at a picture with attention, or read a sentence with understanding.

2. Gentlemen, believe me, there never was any great advancing art yet, nor can be, without didactic purpose. The leaders of the strong

schools are, and must be always, either teachers of theology, or preachers of the moral law. I need not tell you that it was as teachers of theology on the walls of the Vatican that the masters with whose names you are most familiar obtained their perpetual fame. But however great their fame, you have not practically, I imagine, ever been materially assisted in your preparation for the schools either of philosophy or divinity by Raphael's 'School of Athens,' by Raphael's 'Theology,'—or by Michael Angelo's 'Judgment.' My task, to-day, is to set before you some part of the design of the first Master of the works in the Sistine Chapel; and I believe that, from his teaching, you will, even in the hour which I ask you now to give, learn what may be of true use to you in all your future labour, whether in Oxford or elsewhere.

3. You have doubtless, in the course of these lectures, been occasionally surprised by my speaking of Holbein and Sandro Botticelli, as Reformers, in the same tone of respect, and with the same implied assertion of their intellectual power and agency, with which it is usual to speak of Luther and Savonarola. You have been accustomed, indeed, to hear painting and sculpture spoken of as supporting or enforcing Church

doctrine; but never as reforming or chastising it. Whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, you have admitted what in the one case you held to be the abuse of painting in the furtherance of idolatry,—in the other, its amiable and exalting ministry to the feebleness of faith. But neither have recognized,—the Protestant his ally,—or the Catholic his enemy, in the far more earnest work of the great painters of the fifteenth century. The Protestant was, in most cases, too vulgar to understand the aid offered to him by painting; and in all cases too terrified to believe in it. He drove the gift-bringing Greek with imprecations from his sectarian fortress, or received him within it only on the condition that he should speak no word of religion there.

4. On the other hand, the Catholic, in most cases too indolent to read, and, in all, too proud to dread, the rebuke of the reforming painters, confused them with the crowd of his old flatterers, and little noticed their altered language, or their graver brow. In a little while, finding they had ceased to be amusing, he effaced their works, not as dangerous, but as dull; and recognized only thenceforward, as art, the innocuous bombast of Michael Angelo, and fluent efflorescence of Bernini. But when you become more intimately and

impartially acquainted with the history of the Reformation, you will find that, as surely and earnestly as Memling and Giotto strove in the north and south to set forth and exalt the Catholic faith, so surely and earnestly did Holbein and Botticelli strive, in the north, to chastise, and, in the south, to revive it. In what manner, I will try to-day briefly to show you.

5. I name these two men as the reforming leaders: there were many, rank and file, who worked in alliance with Holbein; with Botticelli, two great ones, Lippi and Perugino. But both of these had so much pleasure in their own pictorial faculty, that they strove to keep quiet, and out of harm's way,—involuntarily manifesting themselves sometimes, however; and not in the wisest manner. Lippi's running away with a novice was not likely to be understood as a step in Church reformation correspondent to Luther's marriage.* Nor have Protestant divines, even to this day, recognized the real meaning of the

* The world was not then ready for Le Père Hyacinthe;—but the real gist of the matter is that Lippi did, openly and bravely, what the highest prelates in the Church did basely and in secret; also he loved, where they only lusted; and he has been proclaimed therefore by them—and too foolishly believed by us—to have been a shameful person. Of his true life, and the colours given to it, we will try to learn something tenable, before we end our work in Florence.

reports of Perugino's 'infidelity.' Botticelli, the pupil of the one, and the companion of the other, held the truths they taught him through sorrow as well as joy; and he is the greatest of the reformers, because he preached without blame; though the least known, because he died without victory.

I had hoped to be able to lay before you some better biography of him than the traditions of Vasari, of which I gave a short abstract some time back in Fors Clavigera; but as yet I have only added internal evidence to the popular story, the more important points of which I must review briefly. It will not waste your time if I read,—instead of merely giving you reference to,—the passages on which I must comment.

6. "His father, Mariano Filipepi, a Florentine citizen, brought him up with care, and caused him to be instructed in all such things as are usually taught to children before they choose a calling. But although the boy readily acquired whatever he wished to learn, yet was he constantly discontented; neither would he take any pleasure in reading, writing, or accounts, insomuch that the father, disturbed by the eccentric habits of his son, turned him over in despair to a gossip of his, called Botticello, who was a goldsmith, and considered a very

competent master of his art, to the intent that the boy might learn the same."

"He took no pleasure in reading, writing, nor accounts"! You will find the same thing recorded of Cimabue; but it is more curious when stated of a man whom I cite to you as typically a gentleman and a scholar. But remember, in those days, though there were not so many entirely correct books issued by the Religious Tract Society for boys to read, there were a great many more pretty things in the world for boys to see. The Val d'Arno was Pater-noster Row to purpose; their Father's Row, with books of His writing on the mountain shelves. And the lad takes to looking at things, and thinking about them, instead of reading about them,—which I commend to you, also, as much the more scholarly practice of the two. To the end, though he knows all about the celestial hierarchies, he is not strong in his letters, nor in his dialect. I asked Mr. Tyrrwhitt to help me through with a bit of his Italian the other day. Mr. Tyrrwhitt could only help me by suggesting that it was "Botticelli for so-and-so." And one of the minor reasons which induce me so boldly to attribute these sibyls to him, instead of Bandini, is that the lettering is so ill done. The engraver would assuredly have

had his lettering all right,—or at least neat. Botticelli blunders through it, scratches impatiently out when he goes wrong; and as I told you there's no repentance in the engraver's trade, leaves all the blunders visible.

7. I may add one fact bearing on this question lately communicated to me.* In the autumn of 1872 I possessed myself of an Italian book of pen drawings, some, I have no doubt, by Mantegna in his youth, others by Sandro himself. In examining these, I was continually struck by the comparatively feeble and blundering way in which the titles were written, while all the rest of the handling was really superb; and still more surprised when, on the sleeves and hem of the robe of one of the principal figures of women, ("Helena rapita da Paris,") I found what seemed to be meant for inscriptions, intricately embroidered; which nevertheless, though beautifully drawn, I could not read. In copying Botticelli's Zipporah this spring, I found the border of her robe wrought with characters of the same kind, which a young painter, working with me, who already knows the minor secrets of Italian art better than I,†

* I insert supplementary notes, when of importance, in the text of the lecture, for the convenience of the general reader.

† Mr. Charles F. Murray.

assures me are letters,—and letters of a language hitherto undeciphered.

8. "There was at that time a close connexion and almost constant intercourse between the goldsmiths and the painters, wherefore Sandro, who possessed considerable ingenuity, and was strongly disposed to the arts of design, became enamoured of painting, and resolved to devote himself entirely to that vocation. He acknowledged his purpose at once to his father; and the latter, who knew the force of his inclination, took him accordingly to the Carmelite monk, Fra Filippo, who was a most excellent painter of that time, with whom he placed him to study the art, as Sandro himself had desired. Devoting himself thereupon entirely to the vocation he had chosen, Sandro so closely followed the directions, and imitated the manner, of his master, that Fra Filippo conceived a great love for him, and instructed him so effectually, that Sandro rapidly attained to such a degree in art as none would have predicted for him."

I have before pointed out to you the importance of training by the goldsmith. Sandro got more good of it, however, than any of the other painters so educated,—being enabled by it to use gold for light to colour, in a glowing harmony never reached with equal perfection, and rarely

attempted, in the later schools. To the last, his paintings are partly treated as work in niello; and he names himself, in perpetual gratitude, from this first artizan master. Nevertheless, the fortunate fellow finds, at the right moment, another, even more to his mind, and is obedient to him through his youth, as to the other through his childhood. And this master loves him; and instructs him 'so effectually,'—in grinding colours, do you suppose, only; or in laying of lines only; or in anything more than these?

9. I will tell you what Lippi must have taught any boy whom he loved. First, humility, and to live in joy and peace, injuring no man—if such innocence might be. Nothing is so manifest in every face by him, as its gentleness and rest. Secondly, to finish his work perfectly, and in such temper that the angels might say of it—not he himself—'Iste perfecit opus.' Do you remember what I told you in the Eagle's Nest, that true humility was in hoping that angels might sometimes admire *our* work; not in hoping that we should ever be able to admire *theirs?* Thirdly,—a little thing it seems, but was a great one,—love of flowers. No one draws such lilies or such daisies as Lippi. Botticelli beat him afterwards in roses, but never in lilies. Fourthly,

due honour for classical tradition. Lippi is the only religious painter who dresses John Baptist in the camel-skin, as the Greeks dressed Heracles in the lion's,—over the head. Lastly, and chiefly of all,—Le Père Hyacinthe taught his pupil certain views about the doctrine of the Church, which the boy thought of more deeply than his tutor, and that by a great deal; and Master Sandro presently got himself into such question for painting heresy, that if he had been as hotheaded as he was true-hearted, he would soon have come to bad end by the tar-barrel. But he is so sweet and so modest, that nobody is frightened; so clever, that everybody is pleased: and at last, actually the Pope sends for him to paint his own private chapel,—where the first thing my young gentleman does, mind you, is to paint the devil, in a monk's dress, tempting Christ! The sauciest thing, out and out, done in the history of the Reformation, it seems to me; yet so wisely done, and with such true respect otherwise shown for what was sacred in the Church, that the Pope didn't mind: and all went on as merrily as marriage bells.

10. I have anticipated, however, in telling you this, the proper course of his biography, to which I now return.

"While still a youth he painted the figure of Fortitude, among those pictures of the Virtues which Antonio and Pietro Pollaiuolo were executing in the Mercatanzia, or Tribunal of Commerce, in Florence. In Santo Spirito, a church of the same city, he painted a picture for the chapel of the Bardi family: this work he executed with great diligence, and finished it very successfully, depicting certain olive and palm trees therein with extraordinary care."

It is by a beautiful chance that the first work of his, specified by his Italian biographer, should be the Fortitude.* Note also what is said of his tree drawing.

"Having, in consequence of this work, obtained much credit and reputation, Sandro was appointed by the Guild of Porta Santa Maria to paint a picture in San Marco, the subject of which is the Coronation of Our Lady, who is surrounded by a choir of angels —the whole extremely well designed, and finished by the artist with infinite care. He executed various works in the Medici Palace for the elder Lorenzo, more particularly a figure of Pallas on a shield wreathed with vine branches, whence flames are proceeding: this he painted of the size of life. A San Sebastiano was also among the most remarkable

* Some notice of this picture is given at the beginning of my third Morning in Florence, 'Before the Soldan.'

of the works executed for Lorenzo. In the church of Santa Maria Maggiore, in Florence, is a Pietà, with small figures, by this master: this is a very beautiful work. For different houses in various parts of the city Sandro painted many pictures of a round form, with numerous figures of women undraped. Of these there are still two examples at Castello, a villa of the Duke Cosimo,—one representing the birth of Venus, who is borne to earth by the Loves and Zephyrs; the second also presenting the figure of Venus crowned with flowers by the Graces: she is here intended to denote the Spring, and the allegory is expressed by the painter with extraordinary grace."

Our young Reformer enters, it seems, on a very miscellaneous course of study; the Coronation of Our Lady; St. Sebastian; Pallas in vine-leaves; and Venus,—without fig-leaves. Not wholly Calvinistic, Fra Filippo's teaching seems to have been! All the better for the boy—being such a boy as he was: but I cannot in this lecture enter farther into my reasons for saying so.

11. Vasari, however, has shot far ahead in telling us of this picture of the Spring, which is one of Botticelli's completest works. Long before he was able to paint Greek nymphs, he had done his best in idealism of greater spirits; and, while

yet quite a youth, painted, at Castello, the Assumption of Our Lady, with "the patriarchs, the prophets, the apostles, the evangelists, the martyrs, the confessors, the doctors, the virgins, and the hierarchies!"

Imagine this subject proposed to a young, (or even old) British artist, for his next appeal to public sensation at the Academy! But do you suppose that the young British artist is wiser and more civilized than Lippi's scholar, because his only idea of a patriarch is of a man with a long beard; of a doctor, the M.D. with the brass plate over the way; and of a virgin, Miss —— of the —— theatre?

Not that even Sandro was able, according to Vasari's report, to conduct the entire design himself. The proposer of the subject assisted him; and they made some modifications in the theology, which brought them both into trouble—so early did Sandro's innovating work begin, into which subjects our gossiping friend waives unnecessary inquiry, as follows.

"But although this picture is exceedingly beautiful, and ought to have put envy to shame, yet there were found certain malevolent and censorious persons who, not being able to affix any other blame to the work, declared that Matteo and Sandro had erred gravely in that matter, and had fallen into grievous heresy.

"Now, whether this be true or not, let none expect the judgment of that question from me: it shall suffice me to note that the figures executed by Sandro in that work are entirely worthy of praise; and that the pains he took in depicting those circles of the heavens must have been very great, to say nothing of the angels mingled with the other figures, or of the various foreshortenings, all which are designed in a very good manner.

"About this time Sandro received a commission to paint a small picture with figures three parts of a braccio high,—the subject an Adoration of the Magi.

"It is indeed a most admirable work: the composition, the design, and the colouring are so beautiful that every artist who examines it is astonished; and, at the time, it obtained so great a name in Florence, and other places, for the master, that Pope Sixtus IV. having erected the chapel built by him in his palace at Rome, and desiring to have it adorned with paintings, commanded that Sandro Botticelli should be appointed Superintendent of the work."

12. Vasari's words, "about this time," are evidently wrong. It must have been many and many a day after he painted Matteo's picture that he took such high standing in Florence as to receive the master-

ship of the works in the Pope's chapel at Rome. Of his position and doings there, I will tell you presently; meantime, let us complete the story of his life.

"By these works Botticelli obtained great honour and reputation among the many competitors who were labouring with him, whether Florentines or natives of other cities, and received from the Pope a considerable sum of money; but this he consumed and squandered totally, during his residence in Rome, where he lived without due care, as was his habit."

13. Well, but one would have liked to hear *how* he squandered his money, and whether he was without care—of other things than money.

It is just possible, Master Vasari, that Botticelli may have laid out his money at higher interest than you know of; meantime, he is advancing in life and thought, and becoming less and less comprehensible to his biographer. And at length, having got rid, somehow, of the money he received from the Pope; and finished the work he had to do, and uncovered it,—free in conscience, and empty in purse, he returned to Florence, where, "being a sophistical person, he made a comment on a part of Dante, and drew the Inferno, and put it in engraving, in which he consumed much time; and not working

for this reason, brought infinite disorder into his affairs."

14. Unpaid work, this engraving of Dante, you perceive,—consuming much time also, and not appearing to Vasari to be work at all. It is but a short sentence, gentlemen,—this, in the old edition of Vasari, and obscurely worded,—a very foolish person's contemptuous report of a thing to him totally incomprehensible. But the thing itself is out-and-out the most important fact in the history of the religious art of Italy. I can show you its significance in not many more words than have served to record it.

Botticelli had been painting in Rome; and had expressly chosen to represent there,—being Master of Works, in the presence of the Defender of the Faith,—the foundation of the Mosaic law; to his mind the Eternal Law of God,—that law of which modern Evangelicals sing perpetually their own original psalm, "Oh, how hate I Thy law! it is my abomination all the day." Returning to Florence, he reads Dante's vision of the Hell created by its violation. He knows that the pictures he has painted in Rome cannot be understood by the people; they are exclusively for the best trained scholars in the Church. Dante, on the other hand, can only be read in manuscript; but the people

ould and would understand *his* lessons, if they were pictured in accessible and enduring form. He throws all his own lauded work aside,—all for which he is most honoured, and in which his now matured and magnificent skill is as easy to him as singing to a perfect musician. And he sets himself to a servile and despised labour,—his friends mocking him, his resources failing him, infinite 'disorder' getting into his affairs—of this world.

15. Never such another thing happened in Italy any more. Botticelli engraved her Pilgrim's Progress for her, putting himself in prison to do it. She would not read it when done. Raphael and Marc Antonio were the theologians for her money. Pretty Madonnas, and satyrs with abundance of tail, —let our pilgrim's progress be in *these* directions, if you please.

Botticelli's own pilgrimage, however, was now to be accomplished triumphantly, with such crowning blessings as Heaven might grant to him. In spite of his friends and his disordered affairs, he went his own obstinate way; and found another man's words worth engraving as well as Dante's; not without perpetuating, also, what he deemed worthy of his own.

16. What would that be, think you? His chosen

works before the Pope in Rome?—his admired Madonnas in Florence?—his choirs of angels and thickets of flowers? Some few of these—yes, as you shall presently see; but "the best attempt of this kind from his hand is the Triumph of Faith, by Fra Girolamo Savonarola, of Ferrara, of whose sect our artist was so zealous a partisan that he totally abandoned painting, and not having any other means of living, he fell into very great difficulties. But his attachment to the party he had adopted increased; he became what was then called a Piagnone, or Mourner, and abandoned all labour; insomuch that, finding himself at length become old, being also very poor, he must have died of hunger had he not been supported by Lorenzo de' Medici, for whom he had worked at the small hospital of Volterra and other places, who assisted him while he lived, as did other friends and admirers of his talents."

17. In such dignity and independence—having employed his talents not wholly at the orders of the dealer—died, a poor bedesman of Lorenzo de' Medici, the President of that high academy of art in Rome, whose Academicians were Perugino, Ghirlandajo, Angelico, and Signorelli; and whose students, Michael Angelo and Raphael.

'A worthless, ill-conducted fellow on the whole,

thinks Vasari, 'with a crazy fancy for scratching on copper.'

Well, here are some of the scratches for you to see; only, first, I must ask you seriously for a few moments to consider what the two powers were, which, with this iron pen of his, he has set himself to reprove.

18. Two great forms of authority reigned over the entire civilized world, confessedly, and by name, in the middle ages. They reign over it still, and must for ever, though at present very far from confessed; and, in most places, ragingly denied.

The first power is that of the Teacher, or true Father; the Father 'in God.' It may be—happy the children to whom it is—the actual father also; and whose parents have been their tutors. But, for the most part, it will be some one else who teaches them, and moulds their minds and brain. All such teaching, when true, being from above, and coming down from the Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning, is properly that of the holy Catholic 'εκκλησια,' council, church, or papacy, of many fathers in God, not of one. Eternally powerful and divine; reverenced of all humble and lowly scholars, in Jewry, in Greece, in Rome, in Gaul, in England, and beyond sea, from Arctic zone to zone.

The second authority is the power of National Law, enforcing justice in conduct by due reward and punishment. Power vested necessarily in magistrates capable of administering it with mercy and equity; whose authority, be it of many or few, is again divine, as proceeding from the King of kings, and was acknowledged, throughout civilized Christendom, as the power of the Holy Empire, or Holy Roman Empire, because first throned in Rome; but it is for ever also acknowledged, namelessly, or by name, by all loyal, obedient, just, and humble hearts, which truly desire that, whether for them or against them, the eternal equities and dooms of Heaven should be pronounced and executed; and as the wisdom or word of their Father should be taught, so the will of their Father should be done, on earth, as it is in heaven.

19. You all here know what contention, first, and then what corruption and dishonour, had paralyzed these two powers before the days of which we now speak. Reproof, and either reform or rebellion, became necessary everywhere. The northern Reformers, Holbein, and Luther, and Henry, and Cromwell, set themselves to their task rudely, and, it might seem, carried it through. The southern Reformers, Dante, and Savonarola, and Botticelli, set hand to their task reverently, and, it seemed, did not by any

means carry it through. But the end is not yet.

20. Now I shall endeavour to-day to set before you the art of Botticelli, especially as exhibiting the modesty of great imagination trained in reverence, which characterized the southern Reformers; and as opposed to the immodesty of narrow imagination, trained in self-trust, which characterized the northern Reformers.

'The modesty of great *imagination;*' that is to say, of the power which conceives all things in true relation, and not only as they affect ourselves. I can show you this most definitely by taking one example of the modern, and unschooled temper, in Bewick;* and setting it beside Botticelli's treatment of the same subject of thought,—namely, the meaning of war, and the reforms necessary in the carrying on of war.

21. Both the men are entirely at one in their purpose. They yearn for peace and justice to rule over the earth, instead of the sword; but see how differently they will say what is in their hearts to the people they address. To Bewick, war was more an

* I am bitterly sorry for the pain which my partial references to the man whom of all English artists whose histories I have read, I most esteem, have given to one remaining member of his family. I hope my meaning may be better understood after she has seen the close of this lecture.

absurdity than it was a horror: he had not seen battle-fields, still less had he read of them, in ancient days. He cared nothing about heroes,—Greek, Roman, or Norman. What he knew, and saw clearly, was that Farmer Hodge's boy went out of the village one holiday afternoon, a fine young fellow, rather drunk, with a coloured riband in his hat; and came back, ten years afterwards, with one leg, one eye, an old red coat, and a tobacco-pipe in the pocket of it. That is what he has got to say, mainly. So, for the pathetic side of the business, he draws you two old soldiers meeting as bricklayers' labourers; and for the absurd side of it, he draws a stone, sloping sideways with age, in a bare field, on which you can just read, out of a long inscription, the words "glorious victory;" but no one is there to read them,—only a jackass, who uses the stone to scratch himself against.

22. Now compare with this Botticelli's reproof of war. *He* had seen it, and often; and between noble persons;—knew the temper in which the noblest knights went out to it;—knew the strength, the patience, the glory, and the grief of it. He would fain see his Florence in peace; and yet he knows that the wisest of her citizens are her bravest soldiers. So he seeks for the ideal of a soldier, and for the greatest glory of war, that in the presence of these

he may speak reverently, what he must speak. He does not go to Greece for his hero. He is not sure that even her patriotic wars were always right. But, by his religious faith, he cannot doubt the nobleness of the soldier who put the children of Israel in possession of their promised land, and to whom the sign of the consent of heaven was given by its pausing light in the valley of Ajalon. Must then setting sun and risen moon stay, he thinks, only to look upon slaughter? May no soldier of Christ bid them stay otherwise than so? He draws Joshua, but quitting his hold of the sword: its hilt rests on his bent knee; and he kneels before the sun, not commands it; and this is his prayer:—

"Oh, King of kings, and Lord of lords, who alone rulest always in eternity, and who correctest all our wanderings,—Giver of melody to the choir of the angels, listen Thou a little to our bitter grief, and come and rule us, oh Thou highest King, with Thy love which is so sweet!"

Is not that a little better, and a little wiser, than Bewick's jackass? Is it not also better, and wiser, than the sneer of modern science? 'What great men are we!—we, forsooth, can make almanacs, and know that the earth turns round. Joshua indeed! Let us have no more talk of the old-clothesman.'

All Bewick's simplicity is in that; but none of Bewick's understanding.

23. I pass to the attack made by Botticelli upon the guilt of wealth. So I had at first written; but I should rather have written, the appeal made by him against the cruelty of wealth, then first attaining the power it has maintained to this day.

The practice of receiving interest had been confined, until this fifteenth century, with contempt and malediction, to the profession, so styled, of usurers, or to the Jews. The merchants of Augsburg introduced it as a convenient and pleasant practice among Christians also; and insisted that it was decorous and proper even among respectable merchants. In the view of the Christian Church of their day, they might more reasonably have set themselves to defend adultery.* However, they appointed Dr. John Eck, of Ingoldstadt, to hold debates in all possible universities, at their expense, on the allowing of interest; and as these Augsburgers had in Venice their special mart, Fondaco, called of the Germans, their new notions came into direct collision with old Venetian ones, and were much hindered by them, and all the more, because, in opposition to Dr. John Eck, there was preaching on the other side of the Alps. The

* Read Ezekiel xviii.

Franciscans, poor themselves, preached mercy to the poor: one of them, Brother Marco of San Gallo, planned the 'Mount of Pity' for their defence, and the merchants of Venice set up the first in the world, against the German Fondaco. The dispute burned far on towards our own times. You perhaps have heard before of one Antonio, a merchant of Venice, who persistently retained the then obsolete practice of lending money gratis, and of the peril it brought him into with the usurers. But you perhaps did not before know why it was the flesh, or heart of flesh, in him, that they so hated.

24. Against this newly risen demon of authorized usury, Holbein and Botticelli went out to war together. Holbein, as we have partly seen in his designs for the Dance of Death, struck with all his soldier's strength.* Botticelli uses neither satire nor reproach. He turns altogether away from the criminals; appeals only to heaven for defence against them. He engraves the design which, of all his work, must have cost him hardest toil in its execution,—the Virgin praying to her Son in heaven for pity upon the poor: "For these are also my children."† Underneath, are the seven works of Mercy; and in the

* See also the account by Dr. Woltmann of the picture of the Triumph of Riches. 'Holbein and his Time,' p. 352.

† These words are engraved in the plate, as spoken by the Virgin.

midst of them, the building of the Mount of Pity: in the distance lies Italy, mapped in cape and bay, with the cities which had founded mounts of pity, —Venice in the distance, chief. Little seen, but engraved with the master's loveliest care, in the background there is a group of two small figures— the Franciscan brother kneeling, and an angel of Victory crowning him.

25. I call it an angel of Victory, observe, with assurance; although there is no legend claiming victory, or distinguishing this angel from any other of those which adorn with crowns of flowers the nameless crowds of the blessed. For Botticelli has other ways of speaking than by written legends. I know by a glance at this angel that he has taken the action of it from a Greek coin; and I know also that he had not, in his own exuberant fancy, the least need to copy the action of any figure whatever. So I understand, as well as if he spoke to me, that he expects me, if I am an educated gentleman, to recognize this particular action as a Greek angel's; and to know that it is a temporal victory which it crowns.

26. And now farther, observe, that this classical learning of Botticelli's, received by him, as I told you, as a native element of his being, gives not only greater dignity and gentleness, but far wider range,

to his thoughts of Reformation. As he asks for pity from the cruel Jew to the *poor* Gentile, so he asks for pity from the proud Christian to the *untaught* Gentile. Nay, for more than pity, for fellowship, and acknowledgment of equality before God. The learned men of his age in general brought back the Greek mythology as anti-Christian. But Botticelli and Perugino, as pre-Christian; nor only as pre-Christian, but as the foundation of Christianity. But chiefly Botticelli, with perfect grasp of the Mosaic and classic theology, thought over and seized the harmonies of both; and he it was who gave the conception of that great choir of the prophets and sibyls, of which Michael Angelo, more or less ignorantly borrowing it in the Sistine Chapel, in great part lost the meaning, while he magnified the aspect.

27. For, indeed, all Christian and heathen mythology had alike become to Michael Angelo only a vehicle for the display of his own powers of drawing limbs and trunks: and having resolved, and made the world of his day believe, that all the glory of design lay in variety of difficult attitude, he flings the naked bodies about his ceiling with an upholsterer's ingenuity of appliance to the corners they could fit, but with total absence of any legible meaning. Nor do I suppose that one person in a million, even of those

who have some acquaintance with the earlier masters, takes patience in the Sistine Chapel to conceive the original design. But Botticelli's mastership of the works evidently was given to him as a theologian, even more than as a painter; and the moment when he came to Rome to receive it, you may hold for the crisis of the Reformation in Italy. The main effort to save her priesthood was about to be made by her wisest Reformer,—face to face with the head of her Church,—not in contest with him, but in the humblest subjection to him; and in adornment of his own chapel for his own delight, and more than delight, if it might be.

28. Sandro brings to work, not under him, but with him, the three other strongest and worthiest men he knows, Perugino, Ghirlandajo, and Luca Signorelli. There is evidently entire fellowship in thought between Botticelli and Perugino. They two together plan the whole; and Botticelli, though the master, yields to Perugino the principal place, the end of the chapel, on which is to be the Assumption of the Virgin. It was Perugino's favourite subject, done with his central strength; assuredly the crowning work of his life, and of lovely Christian art in Europe.

Michael Angelo painted it out, and drew devils and dead bodies all over the wall instead. But there

remains to us, happily, the series of subjects designed by Botticelli to lead up to this lost one.

29. He came, I said, not to attack, but to restore the Papal authority. To show the power of inherited honour, and universal claim of divine law, in the Jewish and Christian Church,—the law delivered first by Moses; then, in final grace and truth, by Christ.

He designed twelve great pictures, each containing some twenty figures the size of life, and groups of smaller ones scarcely to be counted. Twelve pictures,—six to illustrate the giving of the law by Moses; and six, the ratification and completion of it by Christ. Event by event, the jurisprudence of each dispensation is traced from dawn to close in this correspondence.

1. Covenant of Circumcision.
2. Entrance on his Ministry by Moses.
3. Moses by the Red Sea.
4. Delivery of Law on Sinai.
5. Destruction of Korah.
6. Death of Moses.
7. Covenant of Baptism.
8. Entrance on His Ministry by Christ.
9. Peter and Andrew by the Sea of Galilee.
10. Sermon on Mount.
11. Giving Keys to St. Peter.
12. Last Supper.

Of these pictures, Sandro painted three himself, Perugino three, and the Assumption; Ghirlandajo one, Signorelli one, and Rosselli four.* I believe

* Cosimo Rosselli, especially chosen by the Pope for his gay colouring.

that Sandro intended to take the roof also, and had sketched out the main succession of its design; and that the prophets and sibyls which he meant to paint, he drew first small, and engraved his drawings afterwards, that some part of the work might be, at all events, thus communicable to the world outside of the Vatican.

30. It is not often that I tell you my beliefs; but I am forced here, for there are no dates to found more on. Is it not wonderful that among all the infinite mass of fool's thoughts about the "majestic works of Michael Angelo" in the Sistine Chapel, no slightly more rational person has ever asked what the chapel was first meant to be like, and how it was to be roofed?

Nor can I assure myself, still less you, that all these prophets and sibyls are Botticelli's. Of many there are two engravings, with variations: some are inferior in parts, many altogether. He signed none; never put grand tablets with 'S. B.' into his skies; had other letters than those to engrave, and no time to spare. I have chosen out of the series three of the sibyls, which have, I think, clear internal evidence of being his; and these you shall compare with Michael Angelo's. But first I must put you in mind what the sibyls were.

31. As the prophets represent the voice of God

in man, the sibyls represent the voice of God in nature. They are properly all forms of one sibyl, Διος Βουλη, the counsel of God; and the chief one, at least in the Roman mind, was the Sibyl of Cumae. From the traditions of her, the Romans, and we through them, received whatever lessons the myth, or fact, of sibyl power has given to mortals.

How much have you received, or may you yet receive, think you, of that teaching? I call it the myth, or fact; but remember that, *as* a myth, it *is* a fact. This story has concentrated whatever good there is in the imagination of visionary powers in women, inspired by nature only. The traditions of witch and gipsy are partly its offshoots. You despise both, perhaps. But can you, though in utmost pride of your supreme modern wisdom, suppose that the character—say, even of so poor and far-fallen a sibyl as Meg Merrilies—is only the coinage of Scott's brain; or that, even being no more, it is valueless? Admit the figure of the Cumaean Sibyl, in like manner, to be the coinage only of Virgil's brain. As such, it, and the words it speaks, are yet facts in which we may find use, if we are reverent to them.

To me, personally, (I must take your indulgence for a moment to speak wholly of myself,) they have been of the truest service—quite material and indisputable.

I am writing on St. John's Day, in the monastery of Assisi; and I had no idea whatever, when I sat down to my work this morning, of saying any word of what I am now going to tell you. I meant only to expand and explain a little what I said in my lecture about the Florentine engraving. But it seems to me now that I had better tell you what the Cumaean Sibyl has actually done for me.

32. In 1871, partly in consequence of chagrin at the Revolution in Paris, and partly in great personal sorrow, I was struck by acute inflammatory illness at Matlock, and reduced to a state of extreme weakness; lying at one time unconscious for some hours, those about me having no hope of my life. I have no doubt that the immediate cause of the illness was simply, eating when I was not hungry; so that modern science would acknowledge nothing in the whole business but an extreme and very dangerous form of indigestion; and entirely deny any interference of the Cumaean Sibyl in the matter.

I once heard a sermon by Dr. Guthrie, in Edinburgh, upon the wickedness of fasting. It was very eloquent and ingenious, and finely explained the superiority of the Scotch Free Church to the benighted Catholic Church, in that the Free Church saw no merit in fasting. And there was no mention, from beginning to end of the sermon, of even the

existence of such texts as Daniel i. 12, or Matthew vi. 16.

Without the smallest merit, I admit, in fasting, I was nevertheless reduced at Matlock to a state very near starvation; and could not rise from my pillow, without being lifted, for some days. And in the first clearly pronounced stage of recovery, when the perfect powers of spirit had returned, while the body was still as weak as it well could be, I had three dreams, which made a great impression on me; for in ordinary health my dreams are supremely ridiculous, if not unpleasant; and in ordinary conditions of illness, very ugly, and always without the slightest meaning. But these dreams were all distinct and impressive, and had much meaning, if I chose to take it.

33. The first* was of a Venetian fisherman, who wanted me to follow him down into some water which I thought was too deep; but he called me on, saying he had something to show me; so I followed him; and presently, through an opening, as if in the arsenal wall, he showed me the bronze horses of St. Mark's, and said, 'See, the horses are putting on their harness.'

The second was of a preparation at Rome, in St. Peter's, (or a vast hall as large as St. Peter's,) for the

* I am not certain of their order at this distance of time.

exhibition of a religious drama. Part of the play was to be a scene in which demons were to appear in the sky; and the stage servants were arranging grey fictitious clouds, and painted fiends, for it, under the direction of the priests. There was a woman dressed in black, standing at the corner of the stage watching them, having a likeness in her face to one of my own dead friends; and I knew somehow that she was not that friend, but a spirit; and she made me understand, without speaking, that I was to watch, for the play would turn out other than the priests expected. And I waited; and when the scene came on, the clouds became real clouds, and the fiends real fiends, agitating them in slow quivering, wild and terrible, over the heads of the people and priests. I recollected distinctly, however, when I woke, only the figure of the black woman mocking the people, and of one priest in an agony of terror, with the sweat pouring from his brow, but violently scolding one of the stage servants for having failed in some ceremony, the omission of which, he thought, had given the devils their power.

The third dream was the most interesting and personal. Some one came to me to ask me to help in the deliverance of a company of Italian prisoners who were to be ransomed for money. I said I had no money. They answered, Yes, I had some that

belonged to me as a brother of St. Francis, if I would give it up. I said I did not know even that I *was* a brother of St. Francis; but I thought to myself, that perhaps the Franciscans of Fèsole, whom I had helped to make hay in their field in 1845, had adopted me for one; only I didn't see how the consequence of that would be my having any money. However, I said they were welcome to whatever I had; and then I heard the voice of an Italian woman singing; and I have never heard such divine singing before nor since;—the sounds absolutely strong and real, and the melody altogether lovely. If I could have written it! But I could not even remember it when I woke,—only how beautiful it was.

34. Now these three dreams have, every one of them, been of much use to me since; or so far as they have failed to be useful, it has been my own fault, and not theirs; but the chief use of them at the time was to give me courage and confidence in myself, both in bodily distress, of which I had still not a little to bear; and worse, much mental anxiety about matters supremely interesting to me, which were turning out ill. And through all such trouble—which came upon me as I was recovering, as if it meant to throw me back into the grave,—I held out and recovered, repeating always to myself,

or rather having always murmured in my ears, at every new trial, one Latin line,

Tu ne cede malis, sed contra fortior ito.

Now I had got this line out of the tablet in the engraving of Raphael's vision, and had forgotten where it came from. And I thought I knew my sixth book of Virgil so well, that I never looked at it again while I was giving these lectures at Oxford, and it was only here at Assisi, the other day, wanting to look more accurately at the first scene by the lake Avernus, that I found I had been saved by the words of the Cumaean Sibyl.

35. "Quam tua te Fortuna sinet," the completion of the sentence, has yet more and continual teaching in it for me now; as it has for all men. Her opening words, which have become hackneyed, and lost all present power through vulgar use of them, contain yet one of the most immortal truths ever yet spoken for mankind; and they will never lose their power of help for noble persons. But observe, both in that lesson, "Facilis descensus Averni," etc.; and in the still more precious, because universal, one on which the strength of Rome was founded,—the burning of the books,—the Sibyl speaks only as the voice of Nature, and of her laws;—not as a divine helper, prevailing over death; but as a mortal

VII.

For a time, and times.

teacher warning us against it, and strengthening us for our mortal time; but not for eternity. Of which lesson her own history is a part, and her habitation by the Avernus lake. She desires immortality, fondly and vainly, as we do ourselves. She receives, from the love of her *refused* lover, Apollo, not immortality, but length of life;—her years to be as the grains of dust in her hand. And even this she finds was a false desire; and her wise and holy desire at last is—to die. She wastes away; becomes a shade only, and a voice. The Nations ask her, What wouldst thou? She answers, Peace; only let my last words be true. "L'ultimo mie parlar sie verace."

36. Therefore, if anything is to be conceived, rightly, and chiefly, in the form of the Cumaean Sibyl, it must be of fading virginal beauty, of enduring patience, of far-looking into futurity. "For after my death there shall yet return," she says, "another virgin."

> Jam redit et virgo;—redeunt Saturnia regna,
> Ultima Cumaei venit jam carminis aetas.

Here then is Botticelli's Cumaean Sibyl. She is armed, for she is the prophetess of Roman fortitude;—but her faded breast scarcely raises the corslet; her hair floats, not falls, in waves like the

currents of a river,—the sign of enduring life; the light is full on her forehead: she looks into the distance as in a dream. It is impossible for art to gather together more beautifully or intensely every image which can express her true power, or lead us to understand her lesson.

37. Now you do not, I am well assured, know one of Michael Angelo's sibyls from another: unless perhaps the Delphian, whom of course he makes as beautiful as he can. But of this especially Italian prophetess, one would have thought he might, at least in some way, have shown that he knew the history, even if he did not understand it. She might have had more than one book, at all events, to burn. She might have had a stray leaf or two fallen at her feet. He could not indeed have painted her only as a voice; but his anatomical knowledge need not have hindered him from painting her virginal youth, or her wasting and watching age, or her inspired hope of a holier future.

38. Opposite,—fortunately, photograph from the figure itself, so that you can suspect me of no exaggeration,—is Michael Angelo's Cumaean Sibyl, wasting away. It is by a grotesque and most strange chance that he should have made the figure of this Sibyl, of all others in the chapel, the most fleshly and gross, even proceeding to the mon-

VIII.

The Nymph beloved of Apollo.

(MICHAEL ANGELO.)

strous licence of showing the nipples of the breast as if the dress were moulded over them like plaster. Thus he paints the poor nymph beloved of Apollo,—the clearest and queenliest in prophecy and command of all the sibyls,—as an ugly crone, with the arms of Goliath, poring down upon a single book.

39. There is one point of fine detail, however, in Botticelli's Cumaean Sibyl, and in the next I am going to show you, to explain which I must go back for a little while to the question of the direct relation of the Italian painters to the Greek. I don't like repeating in one lecture what I have said in another; but to save you the trouble of reference, must remind you of what I stated in my fourth lecture on Greek birds, when we were examining the adoption of the plume crests in armour, that the crest signifies command; but the diadem, *obedience;* and that every crown is primarily a diadem. It is the thing that binds, before it is the thing that honours.

Now all the great schools dwell on this symbolism. The long flowing hair is the symbol of life, and the διάδημα of the law restraining it. Royalty, or kingliness, over life, restraining and glorifying. In the extremity of restraint—in death, whether noble, as of death to Earth, or ignoble, as of death to Heaven, the διάδημα is fastened with the mort-cloth: "Bound

hand and foot with grave-clothes, and the face bound about with the napkin."

40. Now look back to the first Greek head I ever showed you, used as the type of archaic sculpture in Aratra Pentelici, and then look at the crown in Botticelli's Astrologia. It is absolutely the Greek form,—even to the peculiar oval of the forehead; while the diadem—the governing law—is set with appointed stars—to rule the destiny and thought. Then return to the Cumaean Sibyl. She, as we have seen, is the symbol of enduring life—almost immortal. The diadem is withdrawn from the forehead—reduced to a narrow fillet—here, and the hair thrown free.

41. From the Cumaean Sibyl's diadem, traced only by points, turn to that of the Hellespontic, (Plate 9, opposite). I do not know why Botticelli chose her for the spirit of prophecy in old age; but he has made this the most interesting plate of the series in the definiteness of its connection with the work from Dante, which becomes his own prophecy in old age. The fantastic yet solemn treatment of the gnarled wood occurs, as far as I know, in no other engravings but this, and the illustrations to Dante; and I am content to leave it, with little comment, for the reader's quiet study, as showing the exuberance of imagination which other

IX.

In the woods of Ida.

men at this time in Italy allowed to waste itself in idle arabesque, restrained by Botticelli to his most earnest purposes; and giving the withered tree-trunks hewn for the rude throne of the aged prophetess, the same harmony with her fading spirit which the rose has with youth, or the laurel with victory. Also in its weird characters, you have the best example I can show you of the orders of decorative design which are especially expressible by engraving, and which belong to a group of art-instincts scarcely now to be understood, much less recovered, (the influence of modern naturalistic imitation being too strong to be conquered)—the instincts, namely, for the arrangement of pure line, in labyrinthine intricacy, through which the grace of order may give continual clue. The entire body of ornamental design, connected with writing, in the middle ages seems as if it were a sensible symbol, to the eye and brain, of the methods of error and recovery, the minglings of crooked with straight, and perverse with progressive, which constitute the great problem of human morals and fate; and when I chose the title for the collected series of these lectures, I hoped to have justified it by careful analysis of the methods of labyrinthine ornament, which, made sacred by Theseian traditions,* and beginning in imitation

* Callimachus, 'Delos,' 304, etc.

of physical truth, with the spiral waves of the waters of Babylon as the Assyrian carved them, entangled in their returns the eyes of men, on Greek vase and Christian manuscript—till they closed in the arabesques which sprang round the last luxury of Venice and Rome.

But the labyrinth of life itself, and its more and more interwoven occupation, become too manifold, and too difficult for me; and of the time wasted in the blind lanes of it, perhaps that spent in analysis or recommendation of the art to which men's present conduct makes them insensible, has been chiefly cast away. On the walls of the little room where I finally revise this lecture,* hangs an old silken sampler of great-grandame's work: representing the domestic life of Abraham: chiefly the stories of Isaac and Ishmael. Sarah at her tent-door, watching, with folded arms, the dismissal of Hagar: above, in a wilderness full of fruit trees, birds, and butterflies, little Ishmael lying at the root of a tree, and the spent bottle under another; Hagar in prayer, and the angel appearing to her out of a wreathed line of gloomily undulating clouds, which, with a dark-rayed sun in the midst, surmount the entire composition in two arches, out of which descend shafts of (I suppose) beneficent rain; leaving,

* In the Old King's Arms Hotel, Lancaster.

however, room, in the corner opposite to Ishmael's angel, for Isaac's, who stays Abraham in the sacrifice: the ram in the thicket, the squirrel in the plum tree above him, and the grapes, pears, apples, roses, and daisies of the foreground, being all wrought with involution of such ingenious needlework as may well rank, in the patience, the natural skill, and the innocent pleasure of it, with the truest works of Florentine engraving. Nay; the actual tradition of many of the forms of ancient art is in many places evident,—as for instance in the spiral summits of the flames of the wood on the altar, which are like a group of first-springing fern. On the wall opposite is a smaller composition, representing Justice with her balance and sword, standing between the sun and moon, with a background of pinks, borage, and corncockle: a third is only a cluster of tulips and iris, with two Byzantine peacocks; but the spirits of Penelope and Ariadne reign vivid in all the work—and the richness of pleasurable fancy is as great still, in these silken labours, as in the marble arches and golden roof of the cathedral of Monreale.

But what is the use of explaining or analyzing it? Such work as this means the patience and simplicity of all feminine life; and can be produced, among *us* at least, no more. Gothic tracery itself, another of

the instinctive labyrinthine intricacies of old, though analyzed to its last section, has become now the symbol only of a foolish ecclesiastical sect, retained for their shibboleth, joyless and powerless for all good. The very labyrinth of the grass and flowers of our fields, though dissected to its last leaf, is yet bitten bare, or trampled to slime, by the Minotaur of our lust; and for the traceried spire of the poplar by the brook, we possess but the four-square furnace tower, to mingle its smoke with heaven's thunder-clouds.*

We will look yet at one sampler more of the engraved work, done in the happy time when flowers were pure, youth simple, and imagination gay,—Botticelli's Libyan Sibyl.

Glance back first to the Hellespontic, noting the close fillet, and the cloth bound below the face, and then you will be prepared to understand the last I shall show you, and the loveliest of the southern Pythonesses.

* A manufacturer wrote to me the other day, "We don't *want* to make smoke!" Who said they did?—a hired murderer does not want to commit murder, but does it for sufficient motive. (Even our shipowners don't want to drown their sailors; they will only do it for sufficient motive.) If the dirty creatures *did* want to make smoke, there would be more excuse for them: and that they are not clever enough to consume it, is no praise to them. A man who can't help his hiccough leaves the room: why do they not leave the England they pollute?

X.

Grass of the Desert.

42. A less deep thinker than Botticelli would have made her parched with thirst, and burnt with heat. But the voice of God, through nature, to the Arab or the Moor, is not in the thirst, but in the fountain, —not in the desert, but in the grass of it. And this Libyan Sibyl is the spirit of wild grass and flowers, springing in desolate places.

You see, her diadem is a wreath of them; but the blossoms of it are not fastening enough for her hair, though it is not long yet—(she is only in reality a Florentine girl of fourteen or fifteen)—so the little darling knots it under her ears, and then makes herself a necklace of it. But though flowing hair and flowers are wild and pretty, Botticelli had not, in these only, got the power of Spring marked to his mind. Any girl might wear flowers; but few, for ornament, would be likely to wear grass. So the Sibyl shall have grass in her diadem; not merely interwoven and bending, but springing and strong. You thought it ugly and grotesque at first, did not you? It was made so, because precisely what Botticelli wanted you to look at.

But that's not all. This conical cap of hers, with one bead at the top,—considering how fond the Florentines are of graceful head-dresses, this seems a strange one for a young girl. But, exactly

[illegible]

[illegible] the mist of morning over the dew. [illegible] what [illegible] say to you. The letters are large on her tablet. Her message is the oracle from the temple of the Dew: "The dew of thy birth is as the womb of the morning."

"Ecce venientem diem, et latentia aperientem, teneat gremio gentium regina."

43. Why the daybreak came not then, nor yet has come, but only a deeper darkness; and why there is now neither queen nor king of nations, but every man doing that which is right in his own eyes, I would fain go on, partly to tell you, and partly to meditate with you: but it is not our work for to-day. The issue of the Reformation which these great painters, the scholars of Dante, began, we may follow, farther, in the study to which I propose to lead you, of the lives of Cimabue and Giotto, and the relation of their work at Assisi to the chapel and chambers of the Vatican.

44. To-day let me finish what I have to tell you of the style of southern engraving. What sudden bathos in the sentence, you think! So contemptible the question of style, then, in painting, though not

in literature? You study the 'style' of Homer; the style, perhaps, of Isaiah; the style of Horace, and of Massillon. Is it so vain to study the style of Botticelli?

In all cases, it is equally vain, if you think of their style first. But know their purpose, and then, their way of speaking is worth thinking of. These apparently unfinished and certainly unfilled outlines of the Florentine,—clumsy work, as Vasari thought them,—as Mr. Otley and most of our English amateurs still think them,—are these good or bad engraving?

You may ask now, comprehending their motive, with some hope of answering or being answered rightly. And the answer is, They are the finest gravers' work ever done yet by human hand. You may teach, by process of discipline and of years, any youth of good artistic capacity to engrave a plate in the modern manner; but only the noblest passion, and the tenderest patience, will ever engrave one line like these of Sandro Botticelli.

45. Passion, and patience! Nay, even these you may have to-day in England, and yet both be in vain. Only a few years ago, in one of our northern iron-foundries, a workman of intense power and natural art-faculty set himself to learn engraving;—

made his own tools; gave all the spare hours of his laborious life to learn their use; learnt it; and engraved a plate which, in manipulation, no professional engraver would be ashamed of. He engraved his blast furnace, and the casting of a beam of a steam engine. This, to him, was the power of God, —it was his life. No greater earnestness was ever given by man to promulgate a Gospel. Nevertheless, the engraving is absolutely worthless. The blast furnace *is not* the power of God; and the life of the strong spirit was as much consumed in the flames of it, as ever driven slave's by the burden and heat of the day.

How cruel to say so, if he yet lives, you think! No, my friends; the cruelty will be in you, and the guilt, if, having been brought here to learn that God is your Light, you yet leave the blast furnace to be the only light of England.

It has been, as I said in the note above (p. 191), with extreme pain that I have hitherto limited my notice of our own great engraver and moralist, to the points in which the disadvantages of English art-teaching made him inferior to his trained Florentine rival. But, that these disadvantages were powerless to arrest or ignobly depress him; —that however failing in grace and scholarship, he should never fail in truth or vitality; and that

the precision of his unerring hand *—his inevitable eye—and his rightly judging heart—should place him in the first rank of the great artists not of England only, but of all the world and of all time:—that *this* was possible to him, was simply because he lived a *country* life. Bewick himself, Botticelli himself, Apelles himself, and twenty times Apelles, condemned to slavery in the hell-fire of the iron furnace, could have done—NOTHING. Absolute paralysis of all high human faculty *must* result from labour near fire. The poor engraver of the piston-rod had faculties—not like Bewick's, for if he had had those, he never would have endured the degradation; but assuredly, (I know this by his work,) faculties high enough to have made him one of the most accomplished figure painters of his age. And they are scorched out of him, as the sap from the grass in the oven: while on his Northumberland hill-sides, Bewick grew into as stately life as their strongest pine.

And therefore, in words of his, telling consummate and unchanging truth concerning the life, honour, and happiness of England, and bearing directly on the points of difference between class

* I know no drawing so subtle as Bewick's, since the fifteenth century, except Holbein's and Turner's. I have been greatly surprised lately by the exquisite water-colour work in some of Stothard's smaller vignettes; but he cannot set the line like Turner or Bewick.

and class which I have not dwelt on without need, I will bring these lectures to a close.

"I have always, through life, been of opinion that there is no business of any kind that can be compared to that of a man who farms his own land. It appears to me that every earthly pleasure, with health, is within his reach. But numbers of these men (the old statesmen) were grossly ignorant, and in exact proportion to that ignorance they were sure to be offensively proud. This led them to attempt appearing above their station, which hastened them on to their ruin; but, indeed, this disposition and this kind of conduct invariably leads to such results. There were many of these lairds on Tyneside; as well as many who held their lands on the tenure of 'suit and service,' and were nearly on the same level as the lairds. Some of the latter lost their lands (not fairly, I think) in a way they could not help; many of the former, by their misdirected pride and folly, were driven into towns, to slide away into nothingness, and to sink into oblivion, while their 'ha' houses' (halls), that ought to have remained in their families from generation to generation, have mouldered away. I have always felt extremely grieved to see the ancient mansions of many of the country gentlemen, from somewhat similar causes, meet with a similar fate. The gentry should, in an especial manner,

prove by their conduct that they are guarded against showing any symptom of foolish pride, at the same time that they soar above every meanness, and that their conduct is guided by truth, integrity, and patriotism. If they wish the people to partake with them in these good qualities, they must set them the example, without which no real respect can ever be paid to them. Gentlemen ought never to forget the respectable station they hold in society, and that they are the natural guardians of public morals and may with propriety be considered as the head and the heart of the country, while 'a bold peasantry' are, in truth, the arms, the sinews, and the strength of the same; but when these last are degraded, they soon become dispirited and mean, and often dishonest and useless."

* * * * * *

"This singular and worthy man* was perhaps the

* Gilbert Gray, bookbinder. I have to correct the inaccurate—and very harmfully inaccurate, expression which I used of Bewick, in Love's Meinie, 'a printer's lad at Newcastle.' His first master was a goldsmith and engraver, else he could never have been an artist. I am very heartily glad to make this correction, which establishes another link of relation between Bewick and Botticelli; but my error was partly caused by the impression which the above description of his "most invaluable friend" made on me, when I first read it.

Much else that I meant to correct, or promised to explain, in this lecture, must be deferred to the Appendix; the superiority of the Tuscan to the Greek Aphrodite I may perhaps, even at last, leave the

most invaluable acquaintance and friend I ever met with. His moral lectures and advice to me formed a most important succedaneum to those imparted by my parents. His wise remarks, his detestation of vice, his industry, and his temperance, crowned with a most lively and cheerful disposition, altogether made him appear to me as one of the best of characters. In his workshop I often spent my winter evenings. This was also the case with a number of

reader to admit or deny as he pleases, having more important matters of debate on hand. But as I mean only to play with Proserpina during the spring, I will here briefly anticipate a statement I mean in the Appendix to enforce, namely, of the extreme value of coloured copies by hand, of paintings whose excellence greatly consists in colour, as auxiliary to engravings of them. The prices now given without hesitation for nearly worthless original drawings by fifth-rate artists, would obtain for the misguided buyers, in something like a proportion of ten to one, most precious copies of drawings which can only be represented at all in engraving by entire alteration of their treatment, and abandonment of their finest purposes. I feel this so strongly that I have given my best attention, during upwards of ten years, to train a copyist to perfect fidelity in rendering the work of Turner; and having now succeeded in enabling him to produce facsimiles so close as to look like replicas, facsimiles which I must sign with my own name and his, in the very work of them, to prevent their being sold for real Turner vignettes, I can obtain no custom for him, and am obliged to leave him to make his bread by any power of captivation his original sketches may possess in the eyes of a public which maintains a nation of copyists in Rome, but is content with black and white renderings of great English art; though there is scarcely one cultivated English gentleman or lady who has not been twenty times in the Vatican, for once that they have been in the National Gallery.

young men who might be considered as his pupils; many of whom, I have no doubt, he directed into the paths of truth and integrity, and who revered his memory through life. He rose early to work, lay down when he felt weary, and rose again when refreshed. His diet was of the simplest kind; and he eat when hungry, and drank when dry, without paying regard to meal-times. By steadily pursuing this mode of life he was enabled to accumulate sums of money—from ten to thirty pounds. This enabled him to get books, of an entertaining and moral tendency, printed and circulated at a cheap rate. His great object was, by every possible means, to promote honourable feelings in the minds of youth, and to prepare them for becoming good members of society. I have often discovered that he did not overlook ingenious mechanics, whose misfortunes—perhaps mismanagement—had led them to a lodging in Newgate. To these he directed his compassionate eye, and for the deserving (in his estimation), he paid their debt, and set them at liberty. He felt hurt at seeing the hands of an ingenious man tied up in prison, where they were of no use either to himself or to the community. This worthy man had been educated for a priest; but he would say to me, 'Of a "trouth," Thomas, I did not like their ways.' So he gave up the thoughts of being a

priest, and bent his way from Aberdeen to Edinburgh, where he engaged himself to Allan Ramsay, the poet, then a bookseller at the latter place, in whose service he was both shopman and bookbinder. From Edinburgh he came to Newcastle. Gilbert had had a liberal education bestowed upon him. He had read a great deal, and had reflected upon what he had read. This, with his retentive memory, enabled him to be a pleasant and communicative companion. I lived in habits of intimacy with him to the end of his life; and, when he died, I, with others of his friends, attended his remains to the grave at the Ballast Hills."

And what graving on the sacred cliffs of Egypt ever honoured them, as that grass-dimmed furrow does the mounds of our Northern land?

THE END.

NOTES.

I. The following letter, from one of my most faithful readers, corrects an important piece of misinterpretation in the text. The waving of the reins must be only in sign of the fluctuation of heat round the Sun's own chariot :—

"Spring Field, Ambleside,

"February 11, 1875.

"Dear Mr. Ruskin,—Your fifth lecture on Engraving I have to hand.

"Sandro intended those wavy lines meeting under the Sun's right* hand, (Plate V.) primarily, no doubt, to represent the four ends of the four reins dangling from the Sun's hand. The flames and rays are seen to continue to radiate from the platform of the chariot between and beyond these ends of the reins, and over the knee. He may have wanted to acknowledge that the warmth of the earth was Apollo's, by making these ends of the reins spread out separately and

* "Would not the design have looked better, to us, on the plate than on the print? On the plate, the reins would be in the left hand; and the whole movement be from the left to the right? The two different forms that the radiance takes would symbolize respectively heat and light, would they not?"

wave, and thereby enclose a form like a flame. But I cannot think it.

"Believe me,

"Ever yours truly,

"CHAS. WM. SMITH."

II. I meant to keep labyrinthine matters for my Appendix; but the following most useful byewords from Mr. Tyrrwhitt had better be read at once:—

"In the matter of Cretan Labyrinth, as connected by Virgil with the Ludus Trojæ, or equestrian game of winding and turning, continued in England from twelfth century; and having for last relic the maze* called 'Troy Town,' at Troy Farm, near Somerton, Oxfordshire, which itself resembles the circular labyrinth on a coin of Cnossus in Fors Clavigera.

"The connecting quotation from Virg., Æn., v., 588, is as follows:

'Ut quondam Creta fertur Labyrinthus in alta
Parietibus textum cæcis iter, ancipitemque
Mille viis habuisse dolum, qua signa sequendi
Falleret indeprensus et inremeabilis error.
Haud alio Teucrün nati vestigia cursu
Impediunt, texuntque fagas et prœlia ludo,
Delphinum similes.'"

Labyrinth of Ariadne, as cut on the Downs by shepherds from time immemorial,—

Shakspeare, 'Midsummer Night's Dream,' Act ii., sc. 2:

"*Oberon.* The nine-men's-morris† is filled up with mud;
And the quaint mazes in the wanton green
By lack of tread are undistinguishable."

* Strutt, pp. 97-8, ed. 1801.

† Explained as "a game still played by the shepherds, cowkeepers," etc., in the midland counties.

The following passage, 'Merchant of Venice,' Act iii., sc. 2, confuses (to all appearance) the Athenian tribute to Crete, with the story of Hesione: and may point to general confusion in the Elizabethan mind about the myths:

> "*Portia.* . . . . . with much more love
> Than young Alcides, when he did reduce
> The virgin-tribute paid by howling Troy
> To the sea monster."*

Theseus is the Attic Hercules, however; and Troy may have been a sort of house of call for mythical monsters, in the view of midland shepherds.

* See Iliad, 20, 145.

"Obediente Domino voci hominis."

APPENDIX.

ARTICLE I.

NOTES ON THE PRESENT STATE OF ENGRAVING IN ENGLAND.

I HAVE long deferred the completion of this book, because I had hoped to find time to show, in some fulness, the grounds for my conviction that engraving, and the study of it, since the development of the modern finished school, have been ruinous to European knowledge of art. But I am more and more busied in what I believe to be better work, and can only with extreme brevity state here the conclusions of many years' thought.

These, in several important particulars, have been curiously enforced on me by the carelessness shown by the picture dealers about the copies from Turner which it has cost Mr. Ward and me*

* See note to the close of this article, p. 248.

fifteen years of study together to enable ourselves to make. "They are only copies," say they,—"nobody will look at them."

It never seems to occur even to the most intelligent persons that an engraving also is 'only a copy,' and a copy done with refusal of colour, and with disadvantage of means in rendering shade. But just because this utterly inferior copy can be reduplicated, and introduces a different kind of skill, in another material, people are content to lose all the composition, and all the charm, of the original,—so far as these depend on the chief gift of a *painter*,—colour; while they are gradually misled into attributing to the painter himself qualities impertinently added by the engraver to make his plate popular: and, which is far worse, they are as gradually and subtly prevented from looking, in the original, for the qualities which engraving could never render. Further, it continually happens that the very best colour-compositions engrave worst; for they often extend colours over great spaces at equal pitch, and the green is as dark as the red, and the blue as the brown; so that the engraver can only distinguish them by lines in different directions, and his plate becomes a vague and dead mass of neutral tint; but a bad and forced piece of colour, or a piece of work of the

Bolognese school, which is everywhere black in the shadows, and colourless in the lights, will engrave with great ease, and appear spirited and forcible. Hence engravers, as a rule, are interested in reproducing the work of the worst schools of painting.

Also, the idea that the merit of an engraving consisted in light and shade, has prevented the modern masters from even attempting to render works dependent mainly on outline and expression; like the early frescoes, which should indeed have been the objects of their most attentive and continual skill: for outline and expression are entirely within the scope of engraving; and the scripture histories of an aisle of a cloister might have been engraved, to perfection, with little more pains than are given by ordinary workmen to round a limb by Correggio, or imitate the texture of a dress by Sir Joshua,—and both, at last, inadequately.

I will not lose more time in asserting or lamenting the mischief arising out of the existing system: but will rapidly state what the public should now ask for.

1. Exquisitely careful engraved outlines of all remaining frescoes of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries in Italy, with so much pale tinting as may be explanatory of their main masses; and with the local darks and local lights brilliantly

relieved. The Arundel Society have published some meritorious plates of this kind from Angelico,—not, however, paying respect enough to the local colours, but conventionalizing the whole too much into outline.

2. Finished small plates for book illustration. The cheap woodcutting and etching of popular illustrated books have been endlessly mischievous to public taste: they first obtained their power in a general reaction of the public mind from the insipidity of the lower school of line engraving, brought on it by servile persistence in hack work for ignorant publishers. The last dregs of it may still be seen in the sentimental landscapes engraved for cheap ladies' pocket-books. But the woodcut can never, educationally, take the place of serene and accomplished line engraving; and the training of young artists in whom the gift of delineation prevails over their sense of colour, to the production of scholarly, but small plates, with their utmost honour of skill, would give a hitherto unconceived dignity to the character and range of our popular literature.

3. Vigorous mezzotints from pictures of the great masters, which originally present noble contrasts of light and shade. Many Venetian works are magnificent in this character.

4. Original design by painters themselves, decisively engraved in few lines—(*not* etched); and with such insistance by dotted work on the main contours as we have seen in the examples given from Italian engraving.

5. On the other hand, the men whose quiet patience and exquisite manual dexterity are at present employed in producing large and costly plates, such as that of the Belle Jardinière de Florence, by M. Boucher Desnoyers, should be entirely released from their servile toil, and employed exclusively in producing coloured copies, or light drawings, from the original work. The same number of hours of labour, applied with the like conscientious skill, would multiply precious likenesses of the real picture, full of subtle veracities which no steel line could approach, and conveying, to thousands, true knowledge and unaffected enjoyment of painting; while the finished plate lies uncared for in the portfolio of the virtuoso, serving only, so far as it is seen in the printseller's window by the people, to make them think that sacred painting must always be dull, and unnatural.

I have named the above engraving, because, for persons wishing to study the present qualities and methods of line-work, it is a pleasant and sufficient

possession, uniting every variety of texture with great serenity of unforced effect, and exhibiting every possible artifice and achievement in the distribution of even and rugged, or of close and open line; artifices for which,—while I must yet once more and emphatically repeat that they are illegitimate, and could not be practised in a revived school of classic art,—I would fain secure the reader's reverent admiration, under the conditions exacted by the school to which they belong. Let him endeavour, with the finest point of pen or pencil he can obtain, to imitate the profile of this Madonna in its relief against the grey background of the water surface; let him examine, through a good lens, the way in which the lines of the background are ended in a lance-point as they approach it; the exact equality of depth of shade being restored by inserted dots, which prepare for the transition to the manner of shade adopted in the flesh: then let him endeavour to trace with his own hand some of the curved lines at the edge of the eyelid, or in the rounding of the lip; or if these be too impossible, even a few of the quiet undulations which gradate the folds of the hood behind the hair; and he will, I trust, begin to comprehend the range of delightful work which would be within the reach of such an artist,

employed with more tractable material on more extended subject.

If, indeed, the present system were capable of influencing the mass of the people, and enforcing among them the subtle attention necessary to appreciate it, something might be pleaded in defence of its severity. But all these plates are entirely above the means of the lower middle classes, and perhaps not one reader in a hundred can possess himself, for the study I ask of him, even of the plate to which I have just referred. What, in the stead of such, he can and does possess, let him consider,—and, if possible, just after examining the noble qualities of this conscientious engraving,

Take up, for an average specimen of modern illustrated works, the volume of Dickens's 'Master Humphrey's Clock,' containing 'Barnaby Rudge.'

You have in that book an entirely profitless and monstrous story, in which the principal characters are a coxcomb, an idiot, a madman, a savage blackguard, a foolish tavern-keeper, a mean old maid, and a conceited apprentice,—mixed up with a certain quantity of ordinary operatic pastoral stuff, about a pretty Dolly in ribands, a lover with a wooden leg, and an heroic locksmith. For these latter, the only elements of good, or

life, in the filthy mass of the story,* observe that the author must filch the wreck of those old times of which we fiercely and frantically destroy every living vestige, whenever it is possible. You cannot have your Dolly Varden brought up behind the counter of a railway station; nor your jolly locksmith trained at a Birmingham brass-foundry. And of these materials, observe that you can only have the ugly ones illustrated. The cheap popular art cannot draw for you beauty, sense, or honesty; and for Dolly Varden, or the locksmith, you will look through the vignettes in vain. But every species of distorted folly and vice,—the idiot, the blackguard, the coxcomb, the paltry fool, the degraded woman,—are pictured for your honourable pleasure in every page, with clumsy caricature, struggling to render its dulness tolerable by insisting on defect,—if perchance a penny or two more may be coined out of the Cockney reader's itch for loathsomeness.

Or take up, for instance of higher effort, the 'Cornhill Magazine' for this month, July, 1876. It has a vignette of Venice for an illuminated letter. That is what your decorative art has

* The raven, however, like all Dickens's animals, is perfect: and I am the more angry with the rest because I have every now and then to open the book to look for him.

become, by help of Kensington! The letter to be produced is a T. There is a gondola in the front of the design, with the canopy slipped back to the stern like a saddle over a horse's tail. There is another in the middle distance, all gone to seed at the prow, with its gondolier emaciated into an oar, at the stern; then there is a Church of the Salute, and a Ducal palace,—in which I beg you to observe all the felicity and dexterity of modern cheap engraving; finally, over the Ducal palace there is something, I know not in the least what meant for, like an umbrella dropping out of a balloon, which is the ornamental letter T. Opposite this ornamental design, there is an engraving of two young ladies and a parasol, between two trunks of trees. The white face and black feet of the principal young lady, being the points of the design, are done with as much care,—not with as much dexterity,—as an ordinary sketch of Dumourier's in Punch. The young lady's dress, the next attraction, is done in cheap white and black cutting, with considerably less skill than that of any ordinary tailor's or milliner's shop-book pattern drawing. For the other young lady, and the landscape, take your magnifying glass, and look at the hacked wood that forms the entire shaded surface—one mass of idiotic scrabble, without the remotest

attempt to express a single leaf, flower, or clod of earth. It is such landscape as the public sees out of its railroad window at sixty miles of it in the hour—and good enough for such a public.

Then turn to the last—the poetical plate, p. 122: "Lifts her—lays her down with care." Look at the gentleman with a spade, promoting the advance, over a hillock of hay, of the reposing figure in the black-sided tub. Take your magnifying glass to *that*, and look what a dainty female arm and hand your modern scientific and anatomical schools of art have provided you with! Look at the tender horizontal flux of the sea round the promontory point above. Look at the tender engraving of the linear light on the divine horizon, above the ravenous seagull. Here is Development and Progress for you, from the days of Perugino's horizon, and Dante's daybreaks! Truly, here it seems

> "Si che le bianche e le vermiglie guance
> Per troppa etate divenivan rance."

I have chosen no gross or mean instances of modern work. It is one of the saddest points connected with the matter that the designer of this last plate is a person of consummate art faculty, but bound to the wheel of the modern

Juggernaut, and broken on it. These woodcuts, for 'Barnaby Rudge' and the 'Cornhill Magazine,' are favourably representative of the entire illustrative art industry of the modern press,—industry enslaved to the ghastly service of catching the last gleams in the glued eyes of the daily more bestial English mob,—railroad born and bred, which drags itself about the black world it has withered under its breath, in one eternal grind and shriek,—gobbling,—staring,—chattering,—giggling,—trampling out every vestige of national honour and domestic peace, wherever it sets the staggering hoof of it; incapable of reading, of hearing, of thinking, of looking,—capable only of greed for money, lust for food, pride of dress, and the prurient itch of momentary curiosity for the politics last announced by the newsmonger, and the religion last rolled by the chemist into electuary for the dead.

In the miserably competitive labour of finding new stimulus for the appetite—daily more gross—of this tyrannous mob, we may count as lost, beyond any hope, the artists who are dull, docile, or distressed enough to submit to its demands; and we may count the dull and the distressed by myriads; —and among the docile, many of the best intellects we possess. The few who have sense and strength to assert their own place and supremacy, are driven

into discouraged disease by their isolation, like Turner and Blake; the one abandoning the design of his 'Liber Studiorum' after imperfectly and sadly, against total public neglect, carrying it forward to what it is,—monumental, nevertheless, in landscape engraving; the other producing, with one only majestic series of designs from the book of Job, nothing for his life's work but coarsely iridescent sketches of enigmatic dream.

And, for total result of our English engraving industry during the last hundred and fifty years, I find that practically at this moment I cannot get a *single* piece of true, sweet, and comprehensible art, to place for instruction in any children's school! I can get, for ten pounds apiece, well-engraved portraits of Sir Joshua's beauties showing graceful limbs through flowery draperies; I can get—dirt-cheap—any quantity of Dutch flats, ditches, and hedges, enlivened by cows chewing the cud, and dogs behaving indecently; I can get heaps upon heaps of temples, and forums, and altars, arranged as for academical competition, round seaports, with curled-up ships that only touch the water with the middle of their bottoms. I can get, at the price of lumber, any quantity of British squires flourishing whips and falling over hurdles; and, in suburban shops, a dolorous variety of widowed mothers

nursing babies in a high light, with the Bible on a table, and baby's shoes on a chair. Also, of cheap prints, painted red and blue, of Christ blessing little children, of Joseph and his brethren, the infant Samuel, or Daniel in the lion's den, the supply is ample enough to make every child in these islands think of the Bible as a somewhat dull story-book, allowed on Sunday;—but of trained, wise, and worthy art, applied to gentle purposes of instruction, no single example can be found in the shops of the British printseller or bookseller. And after every dilettante tongue in European society has filled drawing-room and academy alike with idle clatter concerning the divinity of Raphael and Michael Angelo, for these last hundred years, I cannot at this instant, for the first school which I have some power of organizing under St. George's laws, get a good print of Raphael's Madonna of the tribune, or an ordinarily intelligible view of the side and dome of St. Peter's!

And there are simply no words for the mixed absurdity and wickedness of the present popular demand for art, as shown by its supply in our thoroughfares. Abroad, in the shops of the Rue de Rivoli, brightest and most central of Parisian streets, the putrescent remnant of what was once Catholicism promotes its poor gilded pedlars' ware

of nativity and crucifixion into such honourable corners as it can find among the more costly and studious illuminations of the brothel: and although, in Pall Mall, and the Strand, the large-margined Landseer,—Stanfield,—or Turner-proofs, in a few stately windows, still represent, uncared-for by the people, or inaccessible to them, the power of an English school now wholly perished,—these are too surely superseded, in the windows that stop the crowd, by the thrilling attraction with which Doré, Gérome, and Tadema have invested the gambling table, the duelling ground, and the arena; or by the more material and almost tangible truth with which the apothecary-artist stereographs the stripped actress, and the railway mound.

Under these conditions, as I have now repeatedly asserted, no professorship, nor school, of art can be of the least use to the general public. No race can understand a visionary landscape, which blasts its real mountains into ruin, and blackens its river-beds with foam of poison. Nor is it of the least use to exhibit ideal Diana at Kensington, while substantial Phryne may be worshipped in the Strand. The only recovery of our art-power possible,—nay, when once we know the full meaning of it, the only one desirable,—must result from the purification of the nation's heart, and chastisement of its life: utterly

hopeless now, for our adult population, or in our large cities, and their neighbourhood. But, so far as any of the sacred influence of former design can be brought to bear on the minds of the young, and so far as, in rural districts, the first elements of scholarly education can be made pure, the foundation of a new dynasty of thought may be slowly laid. I was strangely impressed by the effect produced in a provincial seaport school for children, chiefly of fishermen's families, by the gift of a little coloured drawing of a single figure from the Paradise of Angelico in the Accademia of Florence. The drawing was wretched enough, seen beside the original; I had only bought it from the poor Italian copyist for charity: but, to the children, it was like an actual glimpse of heaven; they rejoiced in it with pure joy, and their mistress thanked me for it more than if I had sent her a whole library of good books. Of such copies, the grace-giving industry of young girls, now worse than lost in the spurious charities of the bazaar, or selfish ornamentations of the drawing-room, might, in a year's time, provide enough for every dame-school in England; and a year's honest work of the engravers employed on our base novels, might represent to our advanced students every frescoed legend of philosophy and morality extant in Christendom.

For my own part, I have no purpose, in what remains to me of opportunity, either at Oxford or elsewhere, to address any farther course of instruction towards the development of existing schools. After seeing the stream of the Teviot as black as ink, and a putrid carcase of a sheep lying in the dry channel of the Jed, under Jedburgh Abbey, (the entire strength of the summer stream being taken away to supply a single mill,) I know, finally, what value the British mind sets on the 'beauties of nature,' and shall attempt no farther the excitement of its enthusiasm in that direction. I shall indeed endeavour to carry out, with Mr. Ward's help, my twenty years' held purpose of making the real character of Turner's work known, to the persons who, formerly interested by the engravings from him, imagined half the merit was of the engraver's giving. But I know perfectly that to the general people, trained in the midst of the ugliest objects that vice can design, in houses, mills, and machinery, *all* beautiful form and colour is as invisible as the seventh heaven. It is not a question of appreciation at all; the thing is physically invisible to them, as human speech is inaudible during a steam whistle.

And I shall also use all the strength I have to convince those, among our artists of the second order, who are wise and modest enough not to think

themselves the matches of Turner or Michael Angelo, that in the present state of art they only waste their powers in endeavouring to produce original pictures of human form or passion. Modern aristocratic life is too vulgar, and modern peasant life too unhappy, to furnish subjects of noble study; while, even were it otherwise, the multiplication of designs by painters of second-rate power is no more desirable than the writing of music by inferior composers. They may, with far greater personal happiness, and incalculably greater advantage to others, devote themselves to the affectionate and sensitive copying of the works of men of just renown. The dignity of this self-sacrifice would soon be acknowledged with sincere respect; for copies produced by men working with such motive would differ no less from the common trade-article of the galleries than the rendering of music by an enthusiastic and highly trained executant differs from the grinding of a street organ. And the change in the tone of public feeling, produced by familiarity with such work, would soon be no less great than in their musical enjoyment, if having been accustomed only to hear black Christys, blind fiddlers, and hoarse beggars scrape or howl about their streets, they were permitted daily audience of faithful and gentle orchestral rendering of the work of the highest classical masters.

I have not, until very lately, rightly appreciated the results of the labour of the Arundel Society in this direction. Although, from the beginning, I have been honoured in being a member of its council, my action has been hitherto rather of check than help, because I thought more of the differences between our copies and the great originals, than of their unquestionable superiority to anything the public could otherwise obtain.

I was practically convinced of their extreme value only this last winter, by staying at the house of a friend in which the Arundel engravings were the principal decoration; and where I learned more of Masaccio from the Arundel copy of the contest with Simon Magus, than in the Brancacci chapel itself; for the daily companionship with the engraving taught me subtleties in its composition which had escaped me in the multitudinous interest of visits to the actual fresco.

But the work of the Society has been sorely hindered hitherto, because it has had at command only the skill of copyists trained in foreign schools of colour, and accustomed to meet no more accurate requisitions than those of the fashionable traveller. I have always hoped for, and trust at last to obtain, co-operation with our too mildly laborious copyists, of English artists possessing more brilliant

colour faculty; and the permission of our subscribers to secure for them the great ruins of the noble past, undesecrated by the trim, but treacherous, plastering of modern emendation.

Finally, I hope to direct some of the antiquarian energy often to be found remaining, even when love of the picturesque has passed away, to encourage the accurate delineation and engraving of historical monuments, as a direct function of our schools of art. All that I have generally to suggest on this matter has been already stated with sufficient clearness in the first of my inaugural lectures at Oxford: and my forthcoming 'Elements of Drawing' will contain all the directions I can give in writing as to methods of work for such purpose. The publication of these has been hindered, for at least a year, by the abuses introduced by the modern cheap modes of printing engravings. I find the men won't use any ink but what pleases them, nor print but with what pressure pleases them; and if I can get the foreman to attend to the business, and choose the ink right, the men change it the moment he leaves the room, and threaten to throw up the job when they are detected. All this, I have long known well, is a matter of course, in the outcome of modern principles of trade; but it has rendered it hitherto impossible for me to

produce illustrations, which have been ready, as far as my work or that of my own assistants is concerned, for a year and a half. Any one interested in hearing of our progress—or arrest, may write to my Turner copyist, Mr. Ward:* and, in the meantime, they can help my designs for art education best by making these Turner copies more generally known; and by determining, when they travel, to spend what sums they have at their disposal, not in fady photography, but in the encouragement of any good *water-colour* and *pencil* draughtsmen whom they find employed in the *galleries* of Europe.

* 2, Church Terrace, Richmond, Surrey. NOTE.—I have hitherto permitted Mr. Ward to copy any Turner drawing he was asked to do; but, finding there is a run upon the vignettes of Loch Lomond and Derwent, I have forbidden him to do more of them for the present, lest his work should get the least mechanical. The admirable drawings of Venice, by my good assistant Mr. Bunney, resident there, will become of more value to their purchasers every year, as the buildings from which they are made are destroyed. I was but just in time, working with him at Verona, to catch record of Fra Giocondo's work in the smaller square; the most beautiful Renaissance design in North Italy.

ARTICLE II.

DETACHED NOTES.

I.

On the series of Sibyl engravings attributed to Botticelli.

SINCE I wrote the earlier lectures in this volume, I have been made more doubtful on several points which were embarrassing enough before, by seeing some better, (so-called,) impressions of my favourite plates, containing light and shade which did not improve them.

I do not choose to waste time or space in discussion, till I know more of the matter; and that more I must leave to my good friend Mr. Reid of the British Museum to find out for me; for I have no time to take up the subject myself, but I give, for frontispiece to this Appendix, the engraving of Joshua referred to in the text, which however beautiful in thought, is an example of the inferior execution and more elaborate shade which puzzle me. But whatever is said in the previous pages of the plates chosen for example, by whomsoever

done, is absolutely trustworthy. Thoroughly fine they are, in their existing state, and exemplary to all persons and times. And of the rest, in fitting place I hope to give complete—or at least satisfactory account.

II.

On the three excellent engravers representative of the first, middle, and late schools.

I have given opposite a photograph, slightly reduced from the Durer Madonna, alluded to often in the text, as an example of his best conception of womanhood. It is very curious that Durer, the least able of all great artists to represent womanhood, should of late have been a very principal object of feminine admiration. The last thing a woman should do is to write about art. They never see anything in pictures but what they are told, (or resolve to see out of contradiction,)—or the particular things that fall in with their own feelings. I saw a curious piece of enthusiastic writing by an Edinburgh lady, the other day, on the photographs I had taken from the tower of Giotto. She did not care a straw what Giotto had meant by them, declared she felt it her duty only to announce what they were to *her;* and wrote two pages on

The Coronation in the Garden.

the bas-relief of Heracles and Antæus—assuming it to be the death of Abel.

It is not, however, by women only that Durer has been over-praised. He stands so alone in his own field, that the people who care much for him generally lose the power of enjoying anything else rightly; and are continually attributing to the force of his imagination quaintnesses which are merely part of the general mannerism of his day.

The following notes upon him, in relation to two other excellent engravers, were written shortly for extempore expansion in lecturing. I give them, with the others in this terminal article, mainly for use to myself in future reference; but also as more or less suggestive to the reader, if he has taken up the subject seriously, and worth, therefore, a few pages of this closing sheet.

The men I have named as representative of all the good ones composing their school, are alike resolved their engraving shall be lovely.

But Botticelli, the ancient, wants, with as little engraving, as much Sibyl as possible.

Durer, the central, wants, with as much engraving as possible, anything of Sibyl that may chance to be picked up with it.

Beaugrand, the modern, wants, as much Sibyl as possible, and as much engraving too.

I repeat—for I want to get this clear to you—Botticelli wants, with as little engraving, as much Sibyl as possible. For his head is full of Sibyls, and his heart. He can't draw them fast enough: one comes, and another and another; and all, gracious and wonderful and good, to be engraved for ever, if only he had a thousand hands and lives. He scratches down one, with no haste, with no fault, divinely careful, scrupulous, patient, but with as few lines as possible. 'Another Sibyl—let me draw another, for heaven's sake, before she has burnt all her books, and vanished.'

Durer is exactly Botticelli's opposite. He is a workman, to the heart, and will do his work magnificently. 'No matter what I do it on, so that my craft be honourably shown. Anything will do; a Sibyl, a skull, a Madonna and Christ, a hat and feather, an Adam, an Eve, a cock, a sparrow, a lion with two tails, a pig with five legs,—anything will do for me. But see if I don't show you what engraving is, be my subject what it may'!

Thirdly: Beaugrand, I said, wants as much Sibyl as possible, and as much engraving. He is essentially a copyist, and has no ideas of his own, but deep reverence and love for the work of others. He will give his life to represent another man's

thought. He will do his best with every spot and line,—exhibit to you, if you will only look, the most exquisite completion of obedient skill; but will be content, if you will not look, to pass his neglected years in fruitful peace, and count every day well spent that has given softness to a shadow, or light to a smile.

III.

On Durer's landscape, with reference to the sentence in p. 159: "I hope you are pleased."

I spoke just now only of the ill-shaped body of this figure of Fortune, or Pleasure. Beneath her feet is an elaborate landscape. It is all drawn out of Durer's head;—he would look at bones or tendons carefully, or at the leaf details of foreground;—but at the breadth and loveliness of real landscape, never.

He has tried to give you a bird's-eye view of Germany; rocks, and woods, and clouds, and brooks, and the pebbles in their beds, and mills, and cottages, and fences, and what not; but it is all a feverish dream, ghastly and strange, a monotone of diseased imagination.

And here is a little bit of the world he would not look at—of the great river of his land, with

a single cluster of its reeds, and two boats, and an island with a village, and the way for the eternal waters opened between the rounded hills.*

It is just what you may see any day, anywhere, —innocent, seemingly artless; but the artlessness of Turner is like the face of Gainsborough's village girl, and a joy for ever.

IV.

On the study of anatomy.

The virtual beginner of artistic anatomy in Italy was a man called 'The Poulterer'—from his grandfather's trade; 'Pollajuolo,' a man of immense power, but on whom the curse of the Italian mind in this age† was set at its deepest.

Any form of passionate excess has terrific effects on body and soul, in nations as in men; and when this excess is in rage, and rage against your brother, and rage accomplished in habitual deeds of blood,—do you think Nature will forget to set the seal of her indignation upon the forehead? I told

* The engraving of Turner's "Scene on the Rhine" (near Bingen?) with boats on the right, and reedy foreground on left; the opening between its mountain banks in central distance. It is exquisitely engraved, the plate being of the size of the drawing, about ten inches by six, and finished with extreme care and feeling.

† See the horrible picture of St. Sebastian by him in our own National Gallery.

you that the great division of spirit between the northern and southern races had been reconciled in the Val d'Arno. The Font of Florence, and the Font of Pisa, were as the very springs of the life of the Christianity which had gone forth to teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Prince of Peace. Yet these two brother cities were to each other—I do not say as Abel and Cain, but as Eteocles and Polynices, and the words of Æschylus are now fulfilled in them to the uttermost. The Arno baptizes their dead bodies:—their native valley between its mountains is to them as the furrow of a grave;—"and so much of their land they have, as is sepulchre." Nay, not of Florence and Pisa only was this true: Venice and Genoa died in death-grapple; and eight cities of Lombardy divided between them the joy of levelling Milan to her lowest stone. Nay, not merely in city against city, but in street against street, and house against house, the fury of the Theban dragon flamed ceaselessly, and with the same excuse upon men's lips. The sign of the shield of Polynices, Justice bringing back the exile, was to them all, in turn, the portent of death: and their history, in the sum of it and substance, is as of the servants of Joab and Abner by the pool of Gibeon. "They caught

every one his fellow by the head, and thrust his sword in his fellow's side; so they fell down together: wherefore that place was called 'the field of the strong men'."

Now it is not possible for Christian men to live thus, except under a fever of insanity. I have before, in my lectures on Prudence and Insolence in art, deliberately asserted to you the logical accuracy of the term 'demoniacal possession'—the being in the power or possession of a betraying spirit; and the definite sign of such insanity is delight in witnessing pain, usually accompanied by an instinct that gloats over or plays with physical uncleanness or disease, and always by a morbid egotism. It is not to be recognized for demoniacal power so much by its *viciousness*, as its *paltriness*,—the taking pleasure in minute, contemptible, and loathsome things.* Now, in the middle of the gallery of the Brera at Milan, there is an elaborate study of a dead Christ, entirely characteristic of early fifteenth century Italian madman's work. It is called—and was presented to the people as—a Christ; but it *is* only an anatomical study of a vulgar and ghastly dead body, with the soles of the feet set straight at the spectator, and the rest

* As in the muscles of the legs and effort in stretching bows, of the executioners, in the picture just referred to.

foreshortened. It is either Castagno's or Mantegna's, —in my mind, set down to Castagno; but I have not looked at the picture for years, and am not sure at this moment. It does not matter a straw which: it is exactly characteristic of the madness in which all of them—Pollajuolo, Castagno, Mantegna, Lionardo da Vinci, and Michael Angelo, polluted their work with the science of the sepulchre,* and degraded it with presumptuous and paltry technical skill. Foreshorten your Christ, and

* Observe, I entirely distinguish the study of *anatomy*—i.e., of intense bone and muscle—from study of the nude, as the Greeks practised it. This for an entirely great painter is absolutely necessary; but yet I believe, in the case of Botticelli, it was nobly restricted. The following note by Mr. Tyrwhitt contains, I think, the probable truth :—

"The facts relating to Sandro Botticelli's models, or rather to his favourite model (as it appears to me), are but few; and it is greatly to be regretted that his pictures are seldom dated;—if it were certain in what order they appeared, what follows here might approach moral certainty.

"There is no doubt that he had great personal regard for Fra Filippo, up to that painter's death in 1469, Sandro being then twenty-two years old. He may probably have got only good from him; anyhow he would get a strong turn for Realism,—i.e., the treatment of sacred and all other subjects in a realistic manner. He is described in Crowe and Cavalcaselle from Filippino Lippi's Martyrdom of St. Peter, as a sullen and sensual man, with beetle brows, large fleshy mouth, etc., etc. Probably he was a strong man, and intense in physical and intellectual habit.

"This man, then, begins to paint in his strength, with conviction —rather happy and innocent than not—that it is right to paint any beautiful thing, and best to paint the most beautiful,—say in 1470, at twenty-three years of age. The allegorical Spring and the Graces,

paint him, if you can, half putrified,—that is the scientific art of the Renaissance.

It is impossible, however, in so vast a subject to distinguish always the beginner of things from

and the Aphrodite now in the Ufficii, were painted for Cosmo, and seem to be taken by Vasari and others as early, or early-central, works in his life: also the portrait of Simonetta Vespucei.[1] He is known to have painted much in early life for the Vespucei and the Medici;—and this daughter of the former house seems to have been inamorata or mistress of Giuliano de' Medici, murdered by the Pazzi in 1478. Now it seems agreed by Crowe and Cavalcaselle, Pater, etc., (and I am quite sure of it myself as to the pictures mentioned)—first, that the same slender and long-throated model appears in Spring, the Aphrodite, Calumny, and other works.[2] Secondly, that she was Simonetta, the original of the Pitti portrait.

"Now I think she must have been induced to let Sandro draw from her whole person undraped, more or less; and that he must have done so as such a man probably would, in strict honour as to deed, word, and *definite* thought, but under occasional accesses of passion of which he said nothing, and which in all probability and by grace of God refined down to nil, or nearly so, as he got accustomed to look in honour at so beautiful a thing. (He may have left off the undraped after her death.) First, her figure is absolutely fine Gothic; I don't think any antique is so slender. Secondly, she has the sad, passionate, and exquisite Lombard mouth. Thirdly, her limbs shrink together, and she seems not quite to have 'liked it,' or been an accustomed model. Fourthly, there is tradition, giving her name to all those forms.

"Her lover Giuliano was murdered in 1478, and Savonarola hanged and burnt in 1498. Now, can her distress, and Savonarola's preaching, between them, have taken, in few years, all the carnality out of Sandro, supposing him to have come already, by seventy-eight, to that state in which the sight of her delighted him, without provoking

[1] Pitti, Stanza di Prometeo, 348.

[2] I think Zipporah may be a remembrance of her.

the establisher. To the poulterer's son, Pollajuolo, remains the eternal shame of first making insane contest the only subject of art; but the two *establishers* of anatomy were Lionardo and Michael

ulterior feelings? All decent men accustomed to draw from the nude tell us they get to that.

"Sandro's Dante is dated as published in 1482. He may have been saddening by that time, and weary of beauty, pure or mixed;—though he went on painting Madonnas, I fancy. (Can Simonetta be traced in any of them? I think not. The Sistine paintings extend from 1481 to 1484, however. I cannot help thinking Zipporah is impressed with her.) After Savonarola's death, Sandro must have lost heart, and gone into Dante altogether. Most ways in literature and art lead to Dante; and this question about the nude and the purity of Botticelli is no exception to the rule.

"Now in the Purgatorio, Lust is the last sin of which we are to be made pure, and it has to be burnt out of us: being itself as searching as fire, as smouldering, devouring, and all that. Corruptio optimi pessima: and it is the most searching and lasting of evils, because it really is a corruption attendant on true Love, which is eternal—whatever the word means. That this is so, seems to me to demonstrate the truth of the Fall of Man from the condition of moral very-goodness in God's sight. And I think that Dante connected the purifying pains of his intermediate state with actual sufferings in this life, working out repentance,—in himself and others. And the 'torment' of this passion, to the repentant or resisting, or purity-seeking soul is decidedly like the pain of physical burning.

"Further, its casuistry is impracticable; because the more you stir the said 'fire,' the stronger hold it takes. Therefore, men and women are *rightly* secret about it, and detailed confessions unadvisable. Much talk about 'hypocrisy' in this matter is quite wrong and unjust. Then, its connexion with female beauty, as a cause of love between man and woman, seems to me to be the inextricable nodus of the Fall, the here inseparable mixture of good and evil, till soul and body are parted. For the sense of seen Beauty is the awakening

Angelo. You hear of Lionardo chiefly because of his Last Supper, but Italy did not hear of him for that. This was not what brought *her* to worship Lionardo—but the Battle of the Standard.

V.

Fragments on Holbein and others.

Of Holbein's St. Elizabeth, remember, she is not a perfect Saint Elizabeth, by any means. She is an honest and sweet German lady,—the best he could see; he could do no better;—and so I come back to my old story,—no man can do better than he sees: if he can reach the nature round him, it is well; he may fall short of it; he cannot rise above it; "the best, in this kind, are but shadows."

* * * *

Yet that intense veracity of Holbein is indeed the strength and glory of all the northern

of Love, at whatever distance from any kind of return or sympathy—as with a rose, or what not. Sandro may be the man who has gone nearest to the right separation of Delight from Desire: supposing that he began with religion and a straight conscience; saw lovingly the error of Fra Filippo's way; saw with intense distant love the error of Simonetta's; and reflected on Florence and *its* way, and drew nearer and nearer to Savonarola, being yet too big a man for asceticism; and finally wearied of all things, and sunk into poverty and peace."

schools. They exist only in being true. Their work among men is the definition of what *is*, and the abiding by it. They cannot dream of what is not. They make fools of themselves if they try. Think how feeble even Shakspeare is when he tries his hand at a Goddess;—women, beautiful and womanly,—as many as you choose; but who cares what his Minerva or Juno, say in the masque of the Tempest? And for the painters—when Sir Joshua tries for a Madonna, or Vandyke for a Diana—they can't even *paint!* they become total simpletons. Look at Rubens' mythologies in the Louvre, or at modern French heroics, or German pietisms! Why, all—Cornelius, Hesse, Overbeck, and David—put together, are not worth one De Hooghe of an old woman with a broom sweeping a back-kitchen. The one thing we northerns can do is to find out what is fact, and insist on it: mean fact it may be, or noble,—but fact always, or we die.

Yet the intensest form of northern realization can be matched in the south, when the southerns choose. There are two pieces of animal drawing in the Sistine Chapel unrivalled for literal veracity. The sheep at the well in front of Zipporah; and afterwards, when she is going away, leading her children, her eldest boy, like every one else, has

taken his chief treasure with him, and this treasure is his pet dog. It is a little sharp-nosed white fox-terrier, full of fire and life; but not strong enough for a long walk. So little Gershom, whose name was "the stranger" because his father had been a stranger in a strange land,—little Gershom carries his white terrier under his arm, lying on the top of a large bundle to make it comfortable. The doggie puts its sharp nose and bright eyes out, above his hand, with a little roguish gleam sideways in them, which means,—if I can read rightly a dog's expression,—that he has been barking at Moses all the morning, and has nearly put him out of temper:—and without any doubt, I can assert to you that there is not any other such piece of animal painting in the world,—so brief, intense, vivid, and absolutely balanced in truth: as tenderly drawn as if it had been a saint, yet as humorously as Landseer's Lord Chancellor poodle.

Oppose to Holbein's Veracity—Botticelli's Fantasy.

„	„	Shade	„	Colour.
„	„	Despair	„	Faith.
„	„	Grossness	„	Purity.

True Fantasy. Botticelli's Tree in Hellespontic Sybil. Not a real tree at all—yet founded on

intensest perception of beautiful reality. So the swan of Clio, as opposed to Durer's cock, or to Turner's swan.

The Italian power of abstraction into one mythologic personage—Holbein's death is only literal. He has to split his death into thirty different deaths; and each is but a skeleton. But Orcagna's death is one—the power of death itself. There may thus be as much *breadth in thought*, as in execution.

* * * *

What then, we have to ask, is a man *conscious of* in what he sees?

For instance, in all Cruikshank's etchings—however slight the outline—there is an intense consciousness of light and shade, and of local colour, *as a part* of light and shade; but none of colour itself. He was wholly incapable of colouring; and perhaps this very deficiency enabled him to give graphic harmony to engraving.

* * * *

Bewick—snow-pieces, etc. *Grey* predominant; *perfect sense of colour*, coming out in patterns of birds;—yet so uncultivated, that he engraves the brown birds better than pheasant or peacock!

For quite perfect consciousness of colour makes

engraving impossible, and you have instead—Correggio.

VI.

Final notes on light and shade.

You will find in the 138th and 147th paragraphs of my inaugural lectures, statements which, if you were reading the book by yourselves, would strike you probably as each of them difficult, and in some degree inconsistent,—namely, that the school of colour has exquisite character and sentiment; but is childish, cheerful, and fantastic; while the school of shade is deficient in character and sentiment; but supreme in intellect and veracity. "The way by light and shade," I say, "is taken by men of the highest powers of thought and most earnest desire for truth."

The school of shade, I say, is deficient in character and sentiment. Compare any of Durer's Madonnas with any of Angelico's.

Yet you may discern in the Apocalypse engravings that Durer's mind was seeking for truths, and dealing with questions, which no more could have occurred to Angelico's mind than to that of a two-years'-old baby.

The two schools unite in various degrees; but are always distinguishably generic, the two head-

most masters representing each being Tintoret and Perugino. The one, deficient in sentiment, and continually offending us by the want of it, but full of intellectual power and suggestion.

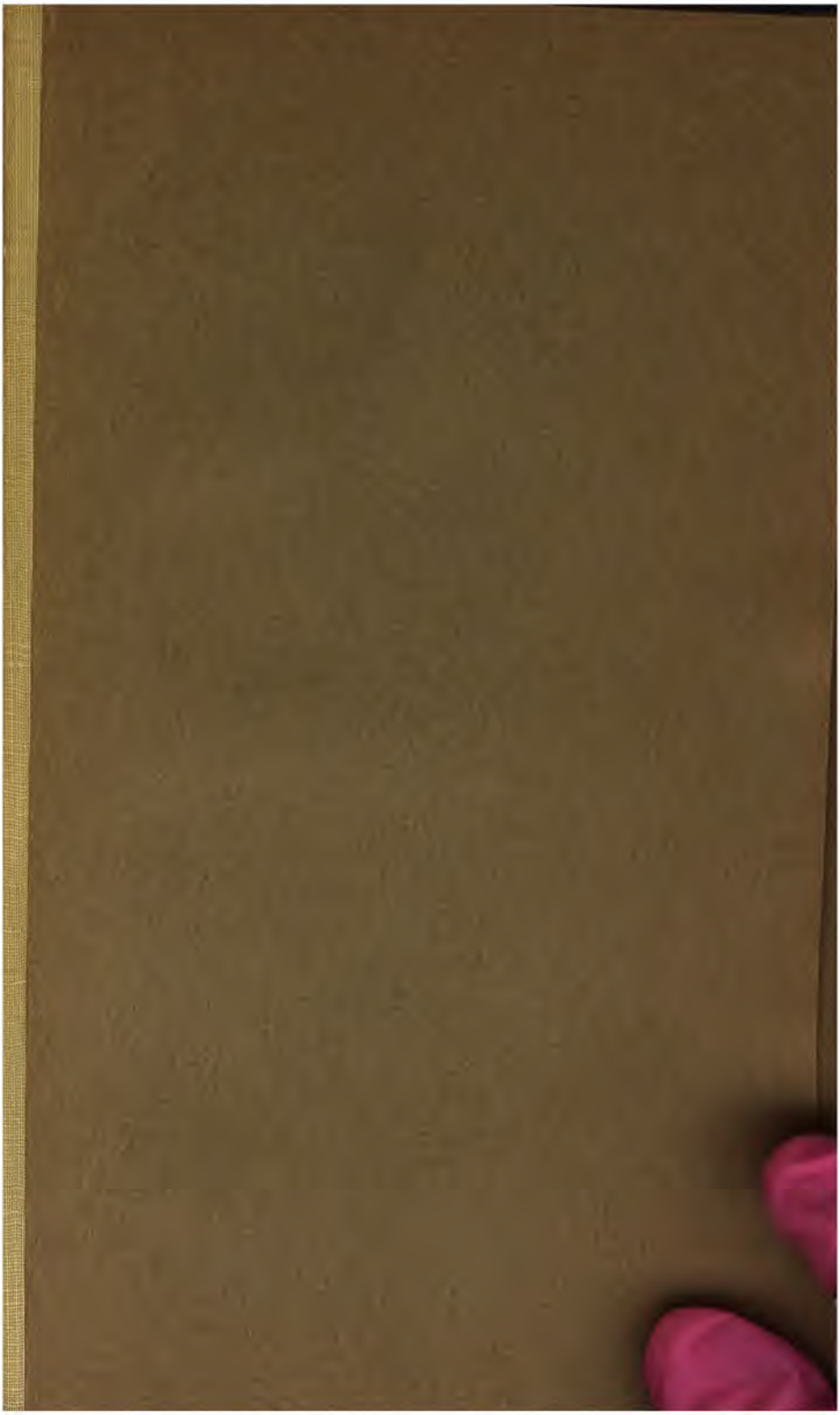
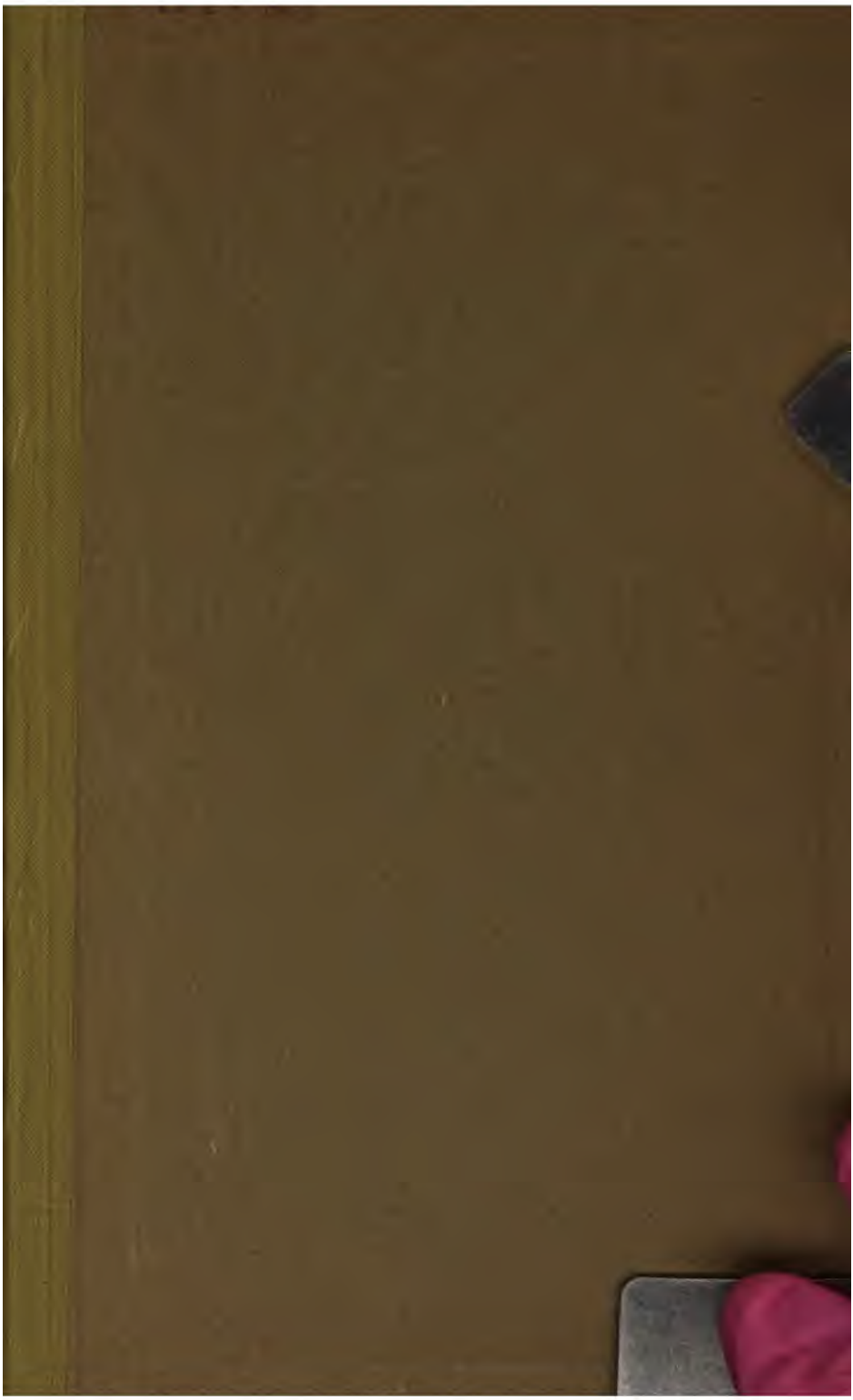
The other, repeating ideas with so little reflection that he gets blamed for doing the same thing over again, (Vasari); but exquisite in sentiment and the conditions of taste which it forms, so as to become the master of it to Raphael and to all succeeding him; and remaining such a type of sentiment, too delicate to be felt by the latter practical mind of Dutch-bred England, that Goldsmith makes the admiration of him the test of absurd connoisseurship. But yet, with under-current of intellect, which gets him accused of free-thinking, and therefore with under-current of entirely exquisite chiaroscuro.

Light and shade, then, imply the understanding of things—Colour, the imagination and the sentiment of them.

In Turner's distinctive work, colour is scarcely acknowledged unless under influence of sunshine. The sunshine is his treasure; his lividest gloom contains it; his greyest twilight regrets it, and remembers. Blue is always a blue shadow; brown or gold, always light;—nothing is cheerful but sunshine; wherever the sun is not, there is melan-

choly or evil. Apollo is God; and all forms of death and sorrow exist in opposition to him.

But in Perugino's distinctive work,—and therefore I have given him the captain's place over all,—there is simply *no* darkness, *no* wrong. Every colour is lovely, and every space is light. The world, the universe, is divine: all sadness is a part of harmony; and all gloom, a part of peace.

THE END.

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